

# PD Gazette International April 2018



*"Young Lady with Drum and Man with Fan Saluting Her"*  
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# THE WALL-FLOWER

Thomas Doubleday.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *A Household Book of English Poetry*, by Various.

I will not praise the often-flattered rose,  
Or, virgin-like, with blushing charms half seen,  
Or when, in dazzling splendour, like a queen,  
All her magnificence of state she shows;  
No, nor that nun-like lily which but blows 5  
Beneath the valley's cool and shady screen;  
Nor yet the sun-flower, that with warrior mien  
Still eyes the orb of glory where it glows;  
But thou, neglected Wall-flower! to my breast  
And Muse art dearest, wildest, sweetest flower! 10  
To whom alone the privilege is given  
Proudly to root thyself above the rest;  
As Genius does, and from thy rocky tower  
Lend fragrance to the purest breath of heaven.

CHURCHILL, WINSTON LEONARD SPENCER

THE (1920) WORLD BOOK

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(1874- \* ), one of the best-known of the modern group of English statesmen, who though he began his Parliamentary career as a Conservative, rose to distinction in the House of Commons as a Liberal. He entered the army in 1895, saw service in India and in Egypt, winning a medal for gallant conduct in the Battle of Khartum, and during the South African War was correspondent for a London paper. Elected to Parliament in 1900, he soon cast in his lot with the Liberals, and in 1905, during the Campbell-Bannerman Ministry, became Parliamentary Secretary for the Colonies. From 1908 to 1910 he was President of the Board of Trade, in 1910 became Home Secretary, and in 1911 was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty in the Asquith Ministry, being one of the youngest men who ever held this office.

Though Churchill was an advocate of a strong navy, in 1913 he suggested to Germany the plan of a "naval holiday," each nation to

cease adding to its navy for one year. The next year saw nearly all Europe involved in the greatest conflict of modern times, the War of the Nations. Churchill's conduct of naval affairs in the war, especially in connection with the campaign in the Dardanelles, caused much dissatisfaction, and when the Cabinet was reorganized English author, soldier and in 1915 he was statesman - relieved of the navy portfolio. But that his great ability might not be lost to the Cabinet, he was appointed to the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In November of the same year he resigned his Cabinet position and joined the army in France, but he retained his seat in Parliament. His writings include *The River War*, *My African Journey* and a biography of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill, who died in 1895. B.M.W.

## MUSIC AND POETRY.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Chambers's Journal of Popular Literature, Science, and Art*, No. 732 January 5, 1878

Art in its different developments may be said to express one idea--beauty. As in different parts of the world different languages are spoken, which all express the same thoughts and feelings, though in different ways, so all the arts are but the various ways of expressing the one moving spirit, the one idea, which is beauty. Painting exhibits or expresses beauty of colour; Sculpture, beauty of form; Architecture, beauty of proportion; Music, beauty of harmony; Poetry, beauty of thought. Each is in some measure transferable to, or capable of part expression by, the others. Thus painting may exhibit the beauty of form as in sculpture, and architecture may combine the beauties both of painting and sculpture, while poetry can in some measure unite the properties of each art.

The various thoughts and feelings of humanity are capable of being expressed in art, in every branch of it. Joy and sorrow, triumph and despair, can be expressed alike faithfully by music, painting, or poetry. The pain that is never entirely absent from this painful earth, aches in sculpture, in verse, and in melody; the love that beats in the great heart of the universe, breathes from the canvas, the marble, and the minstrel. Two arts especially are so blended as to be almost synonymous--Music and Poetry. Poetry is inarticulate music, harmony is

song without words. Poetry is perhaps the highest of all arts, because all the others appeal to the soul through the external senses; while poetry, without sound, without beauty either of form or colour, unites the power of all. Something of the earth is necessary to the production of the other arts; pigments, marbles, strings, instruments of various sorts are indispensable to all except poetry; therefore poetry is the divine art, for it comes direct from the soul. Exquisite word-painting describes a scene as vividly as any painting; perfect rhythm is the purest harmony, and all art is combined in a poem which depicts with the fidelity of painting, which is symmetrical with the perfect proportions of architecture, and which breathes the melody of music.

From the earliest ages, songs have been the heart-notes of nations; the simplest form of poetry, yet the most popular, because written directly from the heart to the heart. Heroic deeds were celebrated in song, love-stories were immortalised in song, ere there was a note of written music or a word of written verse. Thus the twin-sister arts music and poetry, in their infancy scarce distinguishable, passed on hand in hand; but with the lapse of years they grew more divided, their different features becoming more developed, until now, their triumphs have apparently raised a barrier between them, and people forget that they are twin; but the chord of sympathy is still there. The union is not \_less\_; it is only less visible, because more intricate. It is impossible briefly to state all the points where the sister-muses are at one; let us simply, by pointing out a few examples from the great masters of each, attempt to shew that music and poetry are still closely allied.

The three great moving powers of humanity are Faith, Reason, Passion--the Soul, the Head, the Heart. Faith, reverence, worship, or by whatever name may be called that feeling in man which causes him to adore a being greater than himself, has been expressed in poetry by Milton; in music by Handel. Reason, the thoughts of the human mind, the gropings after a true philosophy, has been expressed in the poetry of Shelley, in the music of Mendelssohn. Passion--each varied emotion that throbs in the heart of man, is expressed in the poetry of Byron, in the music of Beethoven. Others might be cited, and resemblances carried to any extent between poets and musicians; but the above may suffice, being not merely fanciful definitions, but thorough truths, fully borne out in fact; not ideal but real.

There is first the poetry and music in which the feeling of worship, the element of religion, is prime agent. Milton can be fairly taken as the poet of reverence. Owing to the peculiar circumstances of his life and times, the great power of his verse is a cry against the follies and sins of a debased people, an earnest cry for more strength of purpose, more firmness of will. It all strives to exalt a Deity who was like to be forgotten by a nation steeped in the vices and frivolities

of Cavalier times. Grand and impressive his verse flows on, a mighty flood, with the hidden strength which shews itself in calm still progress.

Like the full rich notes of the organ sound the words of Milton, as also the noble chords of Handel, whose music, like Milton's verse, is full of adoration. Strange that both in their later years were blind. Could it be that the closing of the eyes of the flesh opened the eyes of the soul to a clearer vision and a more real conception of the Deity? The majesty of God, the insignificance of man, the eternal triumph of good over evil, are their themes, and in the same tones are they uttered. Handel and Milton sound like one voice, now in tones of beseeching tenderness--\_Miserere Domine\_ wailing forth the plaint of sorrow in accents piteous with the burden of woe; again with righteous indignation they witheringly scathe the enemies of the truth and the spirit of evil; and, in \_Gloria in Excelsis\_ they unite in praising the power of the Deity above all names, the one spirit, the 'I am' of the universe.

From the earliest times until now, man has been trying to solve the riddle of existence, eagerly striving after a true philosophy which shall satisfactorily explain to his reason all the complex mechanism of his nature. The highest intellect has vainly striven to pierce the mysteries of time and eternity, until the torch of reason becomes only an \_ignis fatuus\_, leading to dangerous wilds, where there is no path. In poetry the pure reason of man has had few such brilliant exponents as Shelley. Gifted with daring imagination, his genius darted in its wild flight like the lightning from out the storm-cloud; far above the earth his spirit seemed to float, while he breathed forth his marvellous song and toyed with the clouds and the spirits of the spheres. Intellect was his god; he revelled in the beauty of Nature and in the mystic shadows of psychological dreams. His eager soul was ever yearning for a something undefined to satisfy the vague longings of a mind that will take nothing for granted, that cannot believe what it does not understand. Therefore the works of Shelley are admirable examples of the poetry of the \_intellect\_.

Mendelssohn is his counterpart in music; there is the same vivid imagination, the same perfection of harmony, the same wealth of melody in the works of both. His music displays a rich intellect and a brilliant fancy; in it there is mechanical perfection; there is all that knowledge and education can do; heart only is wanting. His cultured mind conjures up sweet sounds, delicate airy visions, grand solemn strains; but there is never a touch of passion in it all. Carefully polished into perfection, the intricacies of his music convey the idea that a vast amount of effort and labour has been bestowed on their production. But in this he differs from Shelley, for Shelley's song is free, spontaneous as a bird's, and in it there is the fire, the

passion which Mendelssohn lacks.

Thus, though there are slight differences in the way in which the intellect is developed in the works of those two masters, yet they both exhibit, above all, the reason, the intellect of man in its highest state of culture. Rich, melodious, dreamy are they both; and each leaves on the listener the same impression as of wandering through a land of perfect loveliness, peopled by beautiful spirits, chanting music now full of exquisite fancies, and again uttering wild cries for that rest and peace which the intellect alone cannot give. A fairy world is that dream-land of Shelley and of Mendelssohn.

Ever nearer to human nature is the music of the heart, the one thing in the universe that changes not. Intellect with the advancing ages advances and changes; religions vary in different lands; but although languages, manners, everything be different, the heart of man remains the same: 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.' Difference of language or of creed is no barrier to the appreciation of Shakspeare, of Mozart, of Raphael. True genius speaks to human nature from the depths of an intensest sympathy, a melody, a thought, which no boundary-line can limit, no distinction of race retard.

How is it that the sublimest music and the most entrancing verse are the results of sorrow? How is it that 'sweetness is wrung out of pain, as the juice is crushed away from the cane?' Out of the fire comes the purified gold, and out of the furnace of trial and pain and sorrow, comes that perfect sympathy which lies at the root of genius. Pain develops faculties which would otherwise lie dormant, and thus out of much suffering grew the deathless song of Byron and the immortal music of Beethoven. Nursed by neglect, fostered by contempt, grew their soul-children into a life which triumphed over the scorn which had slighted their infancy--beautiful soul-children, that shall live for ever in the eternal youth of genius. So long as the heart of humanity shall continue to throb, so long shall continue Byron's verse and Beethoven's harmonies. The \_heart\_, with its passionate longings, its hope and despair, its delight and its utter weariness, is embodied in the works of both. Strains of infinite tenderness and burning notes of passionate intensity, go to the heart of the listener with that strange undefinable power--that thrill, which is the charm of Beethoven's music. That composer once remarked that 'music should strike fire from the heart of man, and bring tears from the eyes of woman.' His music has accomplished both. The works of other musicians may delight or astonish; Weber's sweet notes have a home in many hearts, and Mozart's versatile genius has given to dramatic music its highest expression; but we venture to say that none exercises that marvellous fascination, none weaves the spell of enchantment which dwells in the burning notes of the master musician.

And in Byron's poetry there is the same indescribable attraction, because there is the same power. At present it is the fashion to sneer at his magnificent genius, to humble it ever the lower, the higher is raised the present school, who write of vague shadowy beings, and are strangely destitute of genuine life or passion. The conventional society of the present time is most fittingly mirrored in the conventional poetry of the day. Anything like tender emotion is carefully concealed. In the poetry of Byron there is no straining after effect, no halting for a word or a metaphor; on, ever on flows the song in a resistless tide. His poetry, like that of Burns, his equally gifted brother, is not \_made\_; it breathes, it burns; and is a genuine creation. In Byron's poetry love and hate are no mere affectations; they are genuinely depicted, and meant; while sorrow is touched with the tender cadence of a real grief. There beats in all his verse a true throbbing heart, with all the inconsistencies of temperament which belong to human nature. \_There\_ is the secret of his power, the magic of his verse, which must live so long as hearts shall beat to the tune of love, and there are sorrows in this world of unrest.

The universality of this heart-music is easily understood, even though the intellect of man be ever changing; and each new science in its turn alter the aspect of affairs; each new philosophy seem to overthrow the previous schools. As knowledge becomes more extended, materialism wages a sterner battle against idealism, and a 'reason' that must comprehend all the mysteries of existence, that must apply the crucible to everything, bids fair to abolish 'heart' altogether, as an antiquated emotion; and yet throughout all ages to come, the one touch of nature will still make 'the whole world kin.'

Unaffected in the main by religion or education, we see the same feelings, with all their varying moods, in the inhabitants of the sunniest climes or of the lands of winter snows. Thus is the heart of man ever the same. True genius speaks to that heart; hence it is universal, and can never die. The language of Homer is now esteemed dead, but is the \_Iliad\_ dead? The land of Dante has been steeped in a long sleep, but has the \_Inferno\_ been forgotten? The birthplace of Michael Angelo is disputed, but none disputes the power of his imperishable marbles.

Bright in the beauty of eternal youth, live the song-notes of genius whether in verse or music; age cannot mar the freshness of their charm; time cannot lessen the power of their fascination. Empires are overthrown, victories lost and won, kingdoms once in the first rank are fallen behind, and young nations are spurring on to the front; the world, ever in a turmoil, is a perpetual kaleidoscope of change; but through the clang of battle these voices sound triumphant, and still to the weary and the suffering they whisper peace and comfort.



## PRIMER AMOR

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Cuentos de amor*, by Emilia Pardo Bazán

¿Qué edad contaría yo á la sazón? ¿Once ó doce años? Más bien serían trece, porque antes es demasiado temprano para enamorarse tan de veras; pero no me atrevo á asegurar nada, considerando que en los países meridionales madrega mucho el corazón, dado que esta víscera tenga la culpa de semejantes trastornos.

Si no recuerdo bien el \_cuándo\_, por lo menos puedo decir con completa exactitud el \_cómo\_ empezó mi pasión á revelarse. Gustábame mucho--después de que mi tía se largaba á la iglesia á hacer sus devociones vespertinas--colarme en su dormitorio y revolverle los cajones de la cómoda, que los tenía en un orden admirable. Aquellos cajones eran para mí un museo: siempre tropezaba en ellos con alguna cosa rara, antigua, que exhalaba un olorcillo arcáico y discreto, el aroma de los abanicos de sándalo que andaban por allí perfumando la ropa blanca. Acericos de raso descolorido ya; mitones de malla, muy doblados entre papel de seda; estampitas de santos; enseres de costura; un \_ridículo\_ de terciopelo azul bordado de canutillo; un rosario de ámbar y plata, fueron apareciendo por los rincones: yo los curioseaba y los volvía á su sitio. Pero un día--me acuerdo lo mismo que si fuese hoy--en la esquina del cajón superior y al través de unos cuellos de rancio encaje, ví brillar un objeto dorado.... Metí las manos, arrugué sin querer las puntillas, y saqué un retrato, una miniatura sobre marfil, que mediría tres pulgadas de alto, con marco de oro.

Me quedé como embelesado al mirarla. Un rayo de sol se filtraba por la vidriera y hería la seductora imagen, que parecía querer desprenderse del fondo oscuro y venir hacia mí. Era una criatura hermosísima, como yo no la había visto jamás sino en mis sueños de adolescente, cuando los primeros estremecimientos de la pubertad me causaban, al caer la tarde,



vagas tristezas y anhelos indefinibles. Podría la dama del retrato frisar en los veinte y pico; no era una virgencita cándida, capullo á medio abrir, sino una mujer en quien ya resplandecía todo el fulgor de la belleza. Tenía la cara oval, pero no muy prolongada; los labios carnosos, entreabiertos y risueños; los ojos lánguidamente entornados, y un hoyuelo en la barba, que parecía abierto por la yema del dedo juguetón de Cupido. Su peinado era extraño y gracioso: un grupo compacto, á manera de piña de bucles al lado de las sienes y un cesto de trenzas en lo alto de la cabeza. Este peinado antiguo, que remangaba en la nuca, descubría toda la morbidez de la fresca garganta, donde el hoyo de la barbilla se repetía más delicado y suave. En cuanto al vestido..... Yo no acierto á resolver si nuestras abuelas eran de suyo menos recatadas de lo que son nuestras esposas, ó si los confesores de antaño gastaban manga más ancha que los de hogaño; y me inclino á creer esto último, porque hará unos sesenta años las hembras se preciaban de cristianas y devotas, y no desobedecerían á su director de conciencia en cosa tan grave y patente. Lo indudable es que si en el día se presenta alguna señora con el traje de la dama del retrato, ocasiona un motín; pues desde el talle (que nacía casi en el sobaco) sólo la velaban leves ondas de gasa diáfana, señalando, mejor que cubriendo, dos escándalos de nieve, por entre los cuales serpeaba un hilo de perlas, no sin descansar antes en la tersa superficie del satinado escote. Con el propio impudor se ostentaban los brazos redondos, dignos de Juno, rematados por manos esculturales..... Al decir \_manos\_ no soy exacto, porque en rigor, sólo una mano se veía, y esa apretaba un pañuelo rico.

Aún hoy me asombro del fulminante efecto que la contemplación de aquella miniatura me produjo, y de cómo me quedé arrobado, suspensa la respiración, comiéndome el retrato con los ojos. Ya había yo visto aquí y acullá estampas que representaban mujeres bellas; frecuentemente, en las \_Ilustraciones\_, en los grabados mitológicos del comedor, en los escaparates de las tiendas, sucedía que una línea gallarda, un contorno armonioso y elegante, cautivaba mis miradas precozmente artísticas; pero la miniatura encontrada en el cajón de mi tía, aparte de su gran gentileza, se me figuraba como animada de sutil aura vital; advertíase en ella que no era el capricho de un pintor, sino imagen de persona real, efectiva, de carne y hueso. El rico y jugoso tono del empaste, hacía adivinar, bajo la nacarada epidermis, la sangre tibia; los labios se desviaban para lucir el esmalte de los dientes; y, completando la ilusión, corría alrededor del marco una orla de cabellos naturales, castaños, ondeados y sedosos, que habían crecido en las sienes del original. Lo dicho: aquello, más que copia, era reflejo de persona viva, de la cual sólo me separaba un muro de vidrio..... Puse la mano en él, lo calenté con mi aliento, y se me ocurrió que el calor de la misteriosa deidad se comunicaba á mis labios y circulaba por mis venas. Estando en esto, sentí pisadas en el corredor. Era mi tía que regresaba de sus rezos. Oí su tos asmática y el arrastrar de sus pies gotosos. Tuve tiempo no más que de dejar la miniatura en el cajón, cerrarlo, y

arrimarme á la vidriera, adoptando una actitud indiferente y nada sospechosa.

Entró mi tía sonándose recio, porque el frío de la iglesia le había encrudecido el catarro ya crónico. Al verme se animaron sus ribeteados ojillos, y, dándome un amistoso bofetoncito con la seca palma, me preguntó si le había revuelto los cajones, según costumbre.

Después, sonriéndose con picardía:

--Aguarda, aguarda--añadió--voy á darte algo, que te chuparás los dedos.

Y sacó de su vasta faltriquera un cucurucho, y del cucurucho tres ó cuatro bolitas de goma adheridas entre sí, como aplastadas, que me infundieron asco.

La estampa de mi tía no convidaba á que uno abriese la boca y se zampase el confite: muchos años, la dentadura traspillada, los ojos enterneidos más de lo justo, unos asomos de bigote ó cerdas sobre la hundida boca, la raya de tres dedos de ancho, unas canas sucias revoloteando sobre las sienes amarillas, un pescuezo flácido y lívido como el moco del pavo cuando está de buen humor... Vamos, que yo no tomaba las bolitas, ¡jea! Un sentimiento de indignación: una protesta varonil se alzó en mí, y declaré con energía:

--No quiero, no quiero.

--¿No quieres? ¡Gran milagro! ¡Tú que eres más goloso que la gata!

--Ya no soy ningún chiquillo--exclamé creciéndome, empinándome en la punta de los pies--y no quiero dulces.

La tía me miró entre bondadosa é irónica, y al fin, cediendo á la gracia que le hice, soltó el trapo, con lo cual se desfiguró y puso patente la espantable anatomía de sus quijadas. Reíase de tan buena gana, que se besaban barba y nariz, ocultando los labios, y se le señalaban dos arrugas, ó mejor, dos zanjas hondas, y más de una docena de pliegues en mejillas y párpados; al mismo tiempo, la cabeza y el vientre se le columpiaban con las sacudidas de la risa, hasta que al fin vino la tos á interrumpir las carcajadas, y entre risas y tos, involuntariamente, la vieja me regó la cara con un rocío de saliva... Humillado y lleno de repugnancia, huí á escape y no paré hasta el cuarto de mi madre, donde me lavé con agua y jabón, y me dí á pensar en la dama del retrato.

Y desde aquel punto y hora ya no acerté á separar mi pensamiento de ella. Salir la tía y escurrirme yo hacia su aposento, entreabrir el cajón, sacar la miniatura y embobarme contemplándola, todo era uno. A fuerza de mirarla, figurábaseme que sus ojos entornados, al través de la

voluptuosa penumbra de las pestañas, se fijaban en los míos, y que su blanco pecho respiraba afanosamente. Me llegó á dar vergüenza besarla, imaginando que se enojaba de mi osadía, y sólo la apretaba contra el corazón, ó arrimaba á ella el rostro. Todas mis acciones y pensamientos se referían á la dama; tenía con ella extraños refinamientos y delicadezas nimias. Antes de entrar en el cuarto de mi tía y abrir el codiciado cajón, me lavaba, me peinaba, me componía, como ví después que suele hacerse para acudir á las citas amorosas.

Me sucedía á menudo encontrar en la calle á otros niños de mi edad, muy armados ya de su cacho de novia, que ufanos me enseñaban cartitas, retratos y flores, preguntándome si yo no escogería también \_mi niña\_ con quien cartearme. Un sentimiento de pudor inexplicable me ataba la lengua, y sólo les contestaba con enigmática y orgullosa sonrisa. Cuando me pedían parecer acerca de la belleza de sus damiselillas, me encogía de hombros y las calificaba desdeñosamente de \_feas\_ y \_fachas\_. Ocurrió cierto domingo que fuí á jugar á casa de unas primitas mías, muy graciosas en verdad, y que la mayor no llegaba á los quince. Estábamos muy entretenidos en ver un estereóscopo, y de pronto una de las chiquillas, la menor, doce primaveras á lo sumo, disimuladamente me cogió la mano, y conmovidísima, colorada como una brasa, me dijo al oído:

--Toma.

Al propio tiempo sentí en la palma de la mano una cosa blanda y fresca, y ví que era un capullo de rosa, con su verde follaje. La chiquilla se apartaba sonriendo y echándome una mirada de soslayo; pero yo, con un puritanismo digno del casto José, grité á mi vez:

--¡Toma!

Y le arrojé el capullo á la nariz, desaire que la tuvo toda la tarde llorosa y de monos conmigo, y que aún á estas fechas, que se ha casado y tiene tres hijos, no me ha perdonado probablemente.

Siéndome cortas para admirar el mágico retrato las dos ó tres horas que entre mañana y tarde se pasaba mi tía en la iglesia, me resolví por fin á guardarme la miniatura en el bolsillo, y anduve todo el día escondiéndome de la gente lo mismo que si hubiese cometido un crimen. Se me antojaba que el retrato, desde el fondo de su cárcel de tela, veía todas mis acciones, y llegué al ridículo extremo de que si quería rascarme una pulga, atarme un calcetín ó cualquiera otra cosa menos conforme con el idealismo de mi amor purísimo, sacaba primero la miniatura, la depositaba en sitio seguro y después me juzgaba libre de hacer lo que más me conviniese. En fin, desde que hube consumado el robo, no cabía en mí; de noche lo escondía bajo la almohada y me dormía en actitud de defenderlo; el retrato quedaba vuelto hacia la pared, yo

hacia la parte de afuera, y despertaba mil veces con temor de que viniesen á arrebatarme mi tesoro. Por fin lo saqué de debajo de la almohada y lo deslicé entre la camisa y la carne, sobre la tetilla izquierda, donde al día siguiente se podían ver impresos los cincelados adornos del marco.

El contacto de la cara miniatura me produjo sueños deliciosos. La dama del retrato, no en efigie, sino en su natural tamaño y proporciones, viva, airosa, afable, gallarda, venía hacia mí para conducirme á su palacio, en un carruaje de blandos almohadones. Con dulce autoridad me hacía sentar á sus pies en un cojín, y me pasaba la torneada mano por la cabeza, acariciándome la frente, los ojos y el revuelto pelo. Yo le leía en un gran misal, ó tocaba el laúd, y ella se dignaba sonreirse, agradeciéndome el placer que la causaban mis canciones y lecturas. En fin, las reminiscencias románticas me bullían en el cerebro, y ya era paje, ya trovador.

Con todas estas imaginaciones, el caso es que fuí adelgazando de un modo notable, y lo observaron con gran inquietud mis padres y mi tía.

--En esa difícil y crítica edad del desarrollo, todo es alarmante--dijo mi padre, que solía leer libros de medicina y estudiaba con recelo las ojeras oscuras, los ojos apagados, la boca contraída y pálida, y sobre todo, la completa falta de apetito que se apoderaba de mí.

--Juega, chiquillo; come, chiquillo--solían decirme.

Y yo les contestaba con abatimiento:

--No tengo ganas.

Empezaron á dcurrirme distracciones; me ofrecieron llevarme al teatro; me suspendieron los estudios, y diéronme á beber leche recién ordeñada y espumosa. Después me echaron por el cogote y la espalda duchas de agua fría, para fortificar mis nervios; y noté que mi padre, en la mesa ó por las mañanas cuando iba á su alcoba á darle los buenos días, me miraba fijamente un rato y á veces sus manos se escurrían por mi espinazo abajo, palpando y tentando mis vértebras. Yo bajaba hipócritamente los ojos, resuelto á dejarme morir antes que confesar el delito. En librándome de la cariñosa fiscalización de la familia, ya estaba con mi dama del retrato. Por fin, para mejor acercarme á ella, acordé suprimir el frío cristal: vacilé al ir á ponerlo en obra; al cabo pudo más el amor que el vago miedo que semejante profanación me inspiraba, y con gran destreza logré arrancar el vidrio y dejar patente la plancha de marfil.

Al apoyar en la pintura mis labios y percibir la tenue fragancia de la orla de cabellos, se me figuró con más evidencia que era persona

viviente la que estrechaban mis manos trémulas. Un desvanecimiento se apoderó de mí, y quedé en el sofá como privado de sentido, apretando la miniatura.

Cuando recobré el conocimiento ví á mi padre, á mi madre, á mi tía, todos inclinados hacia mí con sumo interés; leí en sus caras el asombro y el susto; mi padre me pulsaba, meneaba la cabeza y murmuraba:

--Este pulso parece un hilito, una cosa que se va.

Mi tía, con sus dedos ganchudos, se esforzaba en quitarme el retrato, y yo, maquinalmente, lo escondía y aseguraba mejor.

--Pero chiquillo... ¡suelta, que lo echas á perder!--exclamaba ella. ¿No ves que lo estás borrando? Si no te riño, hombre... yo te lo enseñaré cuantas veces quieras; pero no lo estropees; suelta, que le haces daño.

--Déjaselo--suplicaba mi madre--el niño está malito.

--¡Pues no faltaba más!--contestó la solterona.--¡Dejarlo! ¿Y quién hace otro como ese... ni quién me vuelve á mí á los tiempos aquéllos? ¡Hoy en día nadie pinta miniaturas... eso se acabó... y yo también me acabé y no soy lo que ahí aparece!

Mis ojos se dilataban de horror; mis manos aflojaban la pintura. No sé cómo pude articular:

--Usted... el retrato... es usted...

--¿No te parezco tan guapa, chiquillo? ¡Bah! veintitrés años son más bonitos que... que... que no sé cuántos, porque no llevo la cuenta; nadie ha de robármelos!

Doblé la cabeza, y acaso me desmayaría otra vez; lo cierto es que mi padre me llevó en brazos á la cama, y me hizo tragar unas cucharadas de Oporto.

Convalecí presto y no quise entrar más en el cuarto de mi tía.

# A NEAPOLITAN STREET SONG

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Futurist Stories*, by Margery Verner Reed



ALONE--

A CITY full of lights, of pleasure. The sea singing to itself as it rolled quietly into the harbor. A glow of light on distant Vesuvius. Gay throngs of people passing to and fro in the summer evening. Alone. For the first time in her life.

A HEAVY heart--there was no joy.

THEY had come to Naples on their wedding journey. Her brief happiness had been taken--torn from her.

ASHES.

He--cold--rigid--lay in the adjoining room.

TWO candles burned. A nun prayed. Monica leaned out of the window.

THROUGH her tears she saw a star shining in the night.

A STAR of sorrow.

THE sea--they had gone together on its blue waves to Capri--to Sorrento--

WAS it some terrible nightmare--would she awaken and find him near.

FROM a distant street came the sound of music--gay--lively--a Neapolitan street song.

HOW could there be joy. The sound was agony. An organ might have soothed.

HAD there ever been a time when gay music delighted.

O SOLE MIO sang the clear voices of the street singers. They drew nearer--and stopped under the window.

MONICA'S wounded inward self cried out for silence

THE world was drear. There should be no joyful singing.

SHE looked down absently. A young girl stood a little apart from the singers. Monica noticed her--and their tearful eyes met.

THEN singers also could know sorrow.

SUDDENLY--her own seemed lightened.

MONICA'S soul surged forward. She wanted to comfort, to help this brown-eyed girl. Perhaps her grief was harder to bear.

ONE of the men stepped toward the girl and pushed her rudely.

SING he commanded.

O PADRE MIO--she broke into sobs. The singers moved on to another street.

MONICA had read into another soul.

DEEP calling unto deep.



## CUPID A LA CARTE

The Project Gutenberg eBook, *Heart of the West*, by O. Henry

"The dispositions of woman," said Jeff Peters, after various opinions on the subject had been advanced, "run, regular, to diversions. What a woman wants is what you're out of. She wants more of a thing when it's scarce. She likes to have souvenirs of things that never happened. She likes to be reminded of things she never heard of. A one-sided view of

objects is disjointing to the female composition.

"'Tis a misfortune of mine, begotten by nature and travel," continued Jeff, looking thoughtfully between his elevated feet at the grocery stove, "to look deeper into some subjects than most people do. I've breathed gasoline smoke talking to street crowds in nearly every town in the United States. I've held 'em spellbound with music, oratory, sleight of hand, and prevarications, while I've sold 'em jewelry, medicine, soap, hair tonic, and junk of other nominations. And during my travels, as a matter of recreation and expiation, I've taken cognisance some of women. It takes a man a lifetime to find out about one particular woman; but if he puts in, say, ten years, industrious and curious, he can acquire the general rudiments of the sex. One lesson I picked up was when I was working the West with a line of Brazilian diamonds and a patent fire kindler just after my trip from Savannah down through the cotton belt with Dalby's Anti-explosive Lamp Oil Powder. 'Twas when the Oklahoma country was in first bloom. Guthrie was rising in the middle of it like a lump of self-raising dough. It was a boom town of the regular kind--you stood in line to get a chance to wash your face; if you ate over ten minutes you had a lodging bill added on; if you slept on a plank at night they charged it to you as board the next morning.

"By nature and doctrines I am addicted to the habit of discovering choice places wherein to feed. So I looked around and found a proposition that exactly cut the mustard. I found a restaurant tent just opened up by an outfit that had drifted in on the tail of the boom. They had knocked together a box house, where they lived and did the cooking, and served the meals in a tent pitched against the side. That tent was joyful with placards on it calculated to redeem the world-worn pilgrim from the sinfulness of boarding houses and pick-me-up hotels. 'Try Mother's Home-Made Biscuits,' 'What's the Matter with Our Apple Dumplings and Hard Sauce?' 'Hot Cakes and Maple Syrup Like You Ate When a Boy,' 'Our Fried Chicken Never Was Heard to Crow'--there was literature doomed to please the digestions of man! I said to myself that mother's wandering boy should munch there that night. And so it came to pass. And there is where I contracted my case of Mame Dugan.

"Old Man Dugan was six feet by one of Indiana loafer, and he spent his time sitting on his shoulder blades in a rocking-chair in the shanty memorialising the great corn-crop failure of '96. Ma Dugan did the cooking, and Mame waited on the table.

"As soon as I saw Mame I knew there was a mistake in the census reports. There wasn't but one girl in the United States. When you come to specifications it isn't easy. She was about the size of an angel, and she had eyes, and ways about her. When you come to the kind of a



girl she was, you'll find a belt of 'em reaching from the Brooklyn Bridge west as far as the courthouse in Council Bluffs, Ia. They earn their own living in stores, restaurants, factories, and offices. They're chummy and honest and free and tender and sassy, and they look life straight in the eye. They've met man face to face, and discovered that he's a poor creature. They've dropped to it that the reports in the Seaside Library about his being a fairy prince lack confirmation.

"Mame was that sort. She was full of life and fun, and breezy; she passed the repartee with the boarders quick as a wink; you'd have smothered laughing. I am disinclined to make excavations into the insides of a personal affection. I am glued to the theory that the diversions and discrepancies of the indisposition known as love should be as private a sentiment as a toothbrush. 'Tis my opinion that the biographies of the heart should be confined with the historical romances of the liver to the advertising pages of the magazines. So, you'll excuse the lack of an itemised bill of my feelings toward Mame.

"Pretty soon I got a regular habit of dropping into the tent to eat at irregular times when there wasn't so many around. Mame would sail in with a smile, in a black dress and white apron, and say: 'Hello, Jeff --why don't you come at mealtime? Want to see how much trouble you can be, of course. Friedchickenbeefsteakporkchopshamandeggspotpie'--and so on. She called me Jeff, but there was no significations attached. Designations was all she meant. The front names of any of us she used as they came to hand. I'd eat about two meals before I left, and string 'em out like a society spread where they changed plates and wives, and josh one another festively between bites. Mame stood for it, pleasant, for it wasn't up to her to take any canvas off the tent by declining dollars just because they were whipped in after meal times.

"It wasn't long until there was another fellow named Ed Collier got the between-meals affliction, and him and me put in bridges between breakfast and dinner, and dinner and supper, that made a three-ringed circus of that tent, and Mame's turn as waiter a continuous performance. That Collier man was saturated with designs and contrivings. He was in well-boring or insurance or claim-jumping, or something--I've forgotten which. He was a man well lubricated with gentility, and his words were such as recommended you to his point of view. So, Collier and me infested the grub tent with care and activity. Mame was level full of impartiality. 'Twas like a casino hand the way she dealt out her favours--one to Collier and one to me and one to the board, and not a card up her sleeve.

"Me and Collier naturally got acquainted, and gravitated together some on the outside. Divested of his stratagems, he seemed to be a pleasant chap, full of an amiable sort of hostility.

"I notice you have an affinity for grubbing in the banquet hall after the guests have fled,' says I to him one day, to draw his conclusions.

"Well, yes,' says Collier, reflecting; 'the tumult of a crowded board seems to harass my sensitive nerves.'

"It exasperates mine some, too,' says I. 'Nice little girl, don't you think?'

"I see,' says Collier, laughing. 'Well, now that you mention it, I have noticed that she doesn't seem to displease the optic nerve.'

"She's a joy to mine,' says I, 'and I'm going after her. Notice is hereby served.'

"I'll be as candid as you,' admits Collier, 'and if the drug stores don't run out of pepsin I'll give you a run for your money that'll leave you a dyspeptic at the wind-up.'

"So Collier and me begins the race; the grub department lays in new supplies; Mame waits on us, jolly and kind and agreeable, and it looks like an even break, with Cupid and the cook working overtime in Dugan's restaurant.

"Twas one night in September when I got Mame to take a walk after supper when the things were all cleared away. We strolled out a distance and sat on a pile of lumber at the edge of town. Such opportunities was seldom, so I spoke my piece, explaining how the Brazilian diamonds and the fire kindler were laying up sufficient treasure to guarantee the happiness of two, and that both of 'em together couldn't equal the light from somebody's eyes, and that the name of Dugan should be changed to Peters, or reasons why not would be in order.

"Mame didn't say anything right away. Directly she gave a kind of shudder, and I began to learn something.

"Jeff,' she says, 'I'm sorry you spoke. I like you as well as any of them, but there isn't a man in the world I'd ever marry, and there never will be. Do you know what a man is in my eye? He's a tomb. He's a sarcophagus for the interment of Beafsteakporkchopsliver'nbaconham-andeggs. He's that and nothing more. For two years I've watched men eat, eat, eat, until they represent nothing on earth to me but ruminant bipeds. They're absolutely nothing but something that goes in front of a knife and fork and plate at the table. They're fixed that way in my mind and memory. I've tried to overcome it, but I can't. I've heard girls rave about their sweethearts, but I never could

understand it. A man and a sausage grinder and a pantry awake in me exactly the same sentiments. I went to a matinee once to see an actor the girls were crazy about. I got interested enough to wonder whether he liked his steak rare, medium, or well done, and his eggs over or straight up. That was all. No, Jeff; I'll marry no man and see him sit at the breakfast table and eat, and come back to dinner and eat, and happen in again at supper to eat, eat, eat.'

"'But, Mame,' says I, 'it'll wear off. You've had too much of it. You'll marry some time, of course. Men don't eat always.'

"'As far as my observation goes, they do. No, I'll tell you what I'm going to do.' Mame turns, sudden, to animation and bright eyes. 'There's a girl named Susie Foster in Terre Haute, a chum of mine. She waits in the railroad eating house there. I worked two years in a restaurant in that town. Susie has it worse than I do, because the men who eat at railroad stations gobble. They try to flirt and gobble at the same time. Whew! Susie and I have it all planned out. We're saving our money, and when we get enough we're going to buy a little cottage and five acres we know of, and live together, and grow violets for the Eastern market. A man better not bring his appetite within a mile of that ranch.'

"'Don't girls ever--' I commenced, but Mame heads me off, sharp.

"'No, they don't. They nibble a little bit sometimes; that's all.'

"'I thought the confect--'

"'For goodness' sake, change the subject,' says Mame.

"As I said before, that experience puts me wise that the feminine arrangement ever struggles after deceptions and illusions. Take England--beef made her; wieners elevated Germany; Uncle Sam owes his greatness to fried chicken and pie, but the young ladies of the Shetalkyou schools, they'll never believe it. Shakespeare, they allow, and Rubinstein, and the Rough Riders is what did the trick.

"'Twas a situation calculated to disturb. I couldn't bear to give up Mame; and yet it pained me to think of abandoning the practice of eating. I had acquired the habit too early. For twenty-seven years I had been blindly rushing upon my fate, yielding to the insidious lures of that deadly monster, food. It was too late. I was a ruminant biped for keeps. It was lobster salad to a doughnut that my life was going to be blighted by it.

"I continued to board at the Dugan tent, hoping that Mame would relent. I had sufficient faith in true love to believe that since it

has often outlived the absence of a square meal it might, in time, overcome the presence of one. I went on ministering to my fatal vice, although I felt that each time I shoved a potato into my mouth in Mame's presence I might be burying my fondest hopes.

"I think Collier must have spoken to Mame and got the same answer, for one day he orders a cup of coffee and a cracker, and sits nibbling the corner of it like a girl in the parlour, that's filled up in the kitchen, previous, on cold roast and fried cabbage. I caught on and did the same, and maybe we thought we'd made a hit! The next day we tried it again, and out comes old man Dugan fetching in his hands the fairy viands.

"'Kinder off yer feed, ain't ye, gents?' he asks, fatherly and some sardonic. 'Thought I'd spell Mame a bit, seein' the work was light, and my rheumatiz can stand the strain.'

"So back me and Collier had to drop to the heavy grub again. I noticed about that time that I was seized by a most uncommon and devastating appetite. I ate until Mame must have hated to see me darken the door. Afterward I found out that I had been made the victim of the first dark and irreligious trick played on me by Ed Collier. Him and me had been taking drinks together uptown regular, trying to drown our thirst for food. That man had bribed about ten bartenders to always put a big slug of Appletree's Anaconda Appetite Bitters in every one of my drinks. But the last trick he played me was hardest to forget.

"One day Collier failed to show up at the tent. A man told me he left town that morning. My only rival now was the bill of fare. A few days before he left Collier had presented me with a two-gallon jug of fine whisky which he said a cousin had sent him from Kentucky. I now have reason to believe that it contained Appletree's Anaconda Appetite Bitters almost exclusively. I continued to devour tons of provisions. In Mame's eyes I remained a mere biped, more ruminant than ever.

"About a week after Collier pulled his freight there came a kind of side-show to town, and hoisted a tent near the railroad. I judged it was a sort of fake museum and curiosity business. I called to see Mame one night, and Ma Dugan said that she and Thomas, her younger brother, had gone to the show. That same thing happened for three nights that week. Saturday night I caught her on the way coming back, and got to sit on the steps a while and talk to her. I noticed she looked different. Her eyes were softer, and shiny like. Instead of a Mame Dugan to fly from the voracity of man and raise violets, she seemed to be a Mame more in line as God intended her, approachable, and suited to bask in the light of the Brazilians and the Kindler.

"'You seem to be right smart inveigled,' says I, 'with the

Unparalleled Exhibition of the World's Living Curiosities and Wonders.'

""It's a change,' says Mame.

""You'll need another,' says I, 'if you keep on going every night.'

""Don't be cross, Jeff,' says she; 'it takes my mind off business.'

""Don't the curiosities eat?' I ask.

""Not all of them. Some of them are wax.'

""Look out, then, that you don't get stuck,' says I, kind of flip and foolish.

"Mame blushed. I didn't know what to think about her. My hopes raised some that perhaps my attentions had palliated man's awful crime of visibly introducing nourishment into his system. She talked some about the stars, referring to them with respect and politeness, and I drivelled a quantity about united hearts, homes made bright by true affection, and the Kindler. Mame listened without scorn, and I says to myself, 'Jeff, old man, you're removing the hoodoo that has clung to the consumer of victuals; you're setting your heel upon the serpent that lurks in the gravy bowl.'

"Monday night I drop around. Mame is at the Unparalleled Exhibition with Thomas.

""Now, may the curse of the forty-one seven-sided sea cooks,' says I, 'and the bad luck of the nine impenitent grasshoppers rest upon this self-same sideshow at once and forever more. Amen. I'll go to see it myself to-morrow night and investigate its baleful charm. Shall man that was made to inherit the earth be bereft of his sweetheart first by a knife and fork and then by a ten-cent circus?'

"The next night before starting out for the exhibition tent I inquire and find out that Mame is not at home. She is not at the circus with Thomas this time, for Thomas waylays me in the grass outside of the grub tent with a scheme of his own before I had time to eat supper.

""What'll you give me, Jeff,' says he, 'if I tell you something?'

""The value of it, son,' I says.

""Sis is stuck on a freak,' says Thomas, 'one of the side-show freaks. I don't like him. She does. I overheard 'em talking. Thought maybe you'd like to know. Say, Jeff, does it put you wise two dollars'

worth? There's a target rifle up town that--'

"I frisked my pockets and commenced to dribble a stream of halves and quarters into Thomas's hat. The information was of the pile-driver system of news, and it telescoped my intellects for a while. While I was leaking small change and smiling foolish on the outside, and suffering disturbances internally, I was saying, idiotically and pleasantly:

""Thank you, Thomas--thank you--er--a freak, you said, Thomas. Now, could you make out the monstrosity's entitlements a little clearer, if you please, Thomas?"

""This is the fellow,' says Thomas, pulling out a yellow handbill from his pocket and shoving it under my nose. 'He's the Champion Faster of the Universe. I guess that's why Sis got soft on him. He don't eat nothing. He's going to fast forty-nine days. This is the sixth. That's him.'

"I looked at the name Thomas pointed out--'Professor Eduardo Collieri.' 'Ah!' says I, in admiration, 'that's not so bad, Ed Collier. I give you credit for the trick. But I don't give you the girl until she's Mrs. Freak.'

"I hit the sod in the direction of the show. I came up to the rear of the tent, and, as I did so, a man wiggled out like a snake from under the bottom of the canvas, scrambled to his feet, and ran into me like a locoed bronco. I gathered him by the neck and investigated him by the light of the stars. It is Professor Eduardo Collieri, in human habiliments, with a desperate look in one eye and impatience in the other.

""Hello, Curiosity,' says I. 'Get still a minute and let's have a look at your freakship. How do you like being the willopus-wallopus or the bim-bam from Borneo, or whatever name you are denounced by in the side-show business?"

""Jeff Peters,' says Collier, in a weak voice. 'Turn me loose, or I'll slug you one. I'm in the extremest kind of a large hurry. Hands off!'

""Tut, tut, Eddie,' I answers, holding him hard; 'let an old friend gaze on the exhibition of your curiousness. It's an eminent graft you fell onto, my son. But don't speak of assaults and battery, because you're not fit. The best you've got is a lot of nerve and a mighty empty stomach.' And so it was. The man was as weak as a vegetarian cat.

""I'd argue this case with you, Jeff,' says he, regretful in his

style, 'for an unlimited number of rounds if I had half an hour to train in and a slab of beefsteak two feet square to train with. Curse the man, I say, that invented the art of going foodless. May his soul in eternity be chained up within two feet of a bottomless pit of red-hot hash. I'm abandoning the conflict, Jeff; I'm deserting to the enemy. You'll find Miss Dugan inside contemplating the only living mummy and the informed hog. She's a fine girl, Jeff. I'd have beat you out if I could have kept up the grubless habit a little while longer. You'll have to admit that the fasting dodge was aces-up for a while. I figured it out that way. But say, Jeff, it's said that love makes the world go around. Let me tell you, the announcement lacks verification. It's the wind from the dinner horn that does it. I love that Mame Dugan. I've gone six days without food in order to coincide with her sentiments. Only one bite did I have. That was when I knocked the tattooed man down with a war club and got a sandwich he was gobbling. The manager fined me all my salary; but salary wasn't what I was after. 'Twas that girl. I'd give my life for her, but I'd endanger my immortal soul for a beef stew. Hunger is a horrible thing, Jeff. Love and business and family and religion and art and patriotism are nothing but shadows of words when a man's starving!'

"In such language Ed Collier discoursed to me, pathetic. I gathered the diagnosis that his affections and his digestions had been implicated in a scramble and the commissary had won out. I never disliked Ed Collier. I searched my internal admonitions of suitable etiquette to see if I could find a remark of a consoling nature, but there was none convenient.

""I'd be glad, now,' says Ed, 'if you'll let me go. I've been hard hit, but I'll hit the ration supply harder. I'm going to clean out every restaurant in town. I'm going to wade waist deep in sirloins and swim in ham and eggs. It's an awful thing, Jeff Peters, for a man to come to this pass--to give up his girl for something to eat--it's worse than that man Esau, that swapped his copyright for a partridge--but then, hunger's a fierce thing. You'll excuse me, now, Jeff, for I smell a pervasion of ham frying in the distance, and my legs are crying out to stampede in that direction.'

""A hearty meal to you, Ed Collier,' I says to him, 'and no hard feelings. For myself, I am projected to be an unseldom eater, and I have condolence for your predicaments.'

"There was a sudden big whiff of frying ham smell on the breeze; and the Champion Faster gives a snort and gallops off in the dark toward fodder.

"I wish some of the cultured outfit that are always advertising the extenuating circumstances of love and romance had been there to see.

There was Ed Collier, a fine man full of contrivances and flirtations, abandoning the girl of his heart and ripping out into the contiguous territory in the pursuit of sordid grub. 'Twas a rebuke to the poets and a slap at the best-paying element of fiction. An empty stomach is a sure antidote to an overfull heart.

"I was naturally anxious to know how far Mame was infatuated with Collier and his stratagems. I went inside the Unparalleled Exhibition, and there she was. She looked surprised to see me, but unguilty.

"'It's an elegant evening outside,' says I. 'The coolness is quite nice and gratifying, and the stars are lined out, first class, up where they belong. Wouldn't you shake these by-products of the animal kingdom long enough to take a walk with a common human who never was on a programme in his life?'

"Mame gave a sort of sly glance around, and I knew what that meant.

"'Oh,' says I, 'I hate to tell you; but the curiosity that lives on wind has flew the coop. He just crawled out under the tent. By this time he has amalgamated himself with half the delicatessen truck in town.'

"'You mean Ed Collier?' says Mame.

"'I do,' I answers; 'and a pity it is that he has gone back to crime again. I met him outside the tent, and he exposed his intentions of devastating the food crop of the world. 'Tis enormously sad when one's ideal descends from his pedestal to make a seventeen-year locust of himself.'

"Mame looked me straight in the eye until she had corkscrewed my reflections.

"'Jeff,' says she, 'it isn't quite like you to talk that way. I don't care to hear Ed Collier ridiculed. A man may do ridiculous things, but they don't look ridiculous to the girl he does 'em for. That was one man in a hundred. He stopped eating just to please me. I'd be hard-hearted and ungrateful if I didn't feel kindly toward him. Could you do what he did?'

"'I know,' says I, seeing the point, 'I'm condemned. I can't help it. The brand of the consumer is upon my brow. Mrs. Eve settled that business for me when she made the dicker with the snake. I fell from the fire into the frying-pan. I guess I'm the Champion Feaster of the Universe.' I spoke humble, and Mame mollified herself a little.

"'Ed Collier and I are good friends,' she said, 'the same as me and



you. I gave him the same answer I did you--no marrying for me. I liked to be with Ed and talk with him. There was something mighty pleasant to me in the thought that here was a man who never used a knife and fork, and all for my sake.'

"'Wasn't you in love with him?' I asks, all injudicious. 'Wasn't there a deal on for you to become Mrs. Curiosity?'

"All of us do it sometimes. All of us get jostled out of the line of profitable talk now and then. Mame put on that little lemon /glace/ smile that runs between ice and sugar, and says, much too pleasant: 'You're short on credentials for asking that question, Mr. Peters. Suppose you do a forty-nine day fast, just to give you ground to stand on, and then maybe I'll answer it.'

"So, even after Collier was kidnapped out of the way by the revolt of his appetite, my own prospects with Mame didn't seem to be improved. And then business played out in Guthrie.

"I had stayed too long there. The Brazilians I had sold commenced to show signs of wear, and the Kindler refused to light up right frequent on wet mornings. There is always a time, in my business, when the star of success says, 'Move on to the next town.' I was travelling by wagon at that time so as not to miss any of the small towns; so I hitched up a few days later and went down to tell Mame good-bye. I wasn't abandoning the game; I intended running over to Oklahoma City and work it for a week or two. Then I was coming back to institute fresh proceedings against Mame.

"What do I find at the Dugans' but Mame all conspicuous in a blue travelling dress, with her little trunk at the door. It seems that sister Lottie Bell, who is a typewriter in Terre Haute, is going to be married next Thursday, and Mame is off for a week's visit to be an accomplice at the ceremony. Mame is waiting for a freight wagon that is going to take her to Oklahoma, but I condemns the freight wagon with promptness and scorn, and offers to deliver the goods myself. Ma Dugan sees no reason why not, as Mr. Freightier wants pay for the job; so, thirty minutes later Mame and I pull out in my light spring wagon with white canvas cover, and head due south.

"That morning was of a praiseworthy sort. The breeze was lively, and smelled excellent of flowers and grass, and the little cottontail rabbits entertained themselves with skylarking across the road. My two Kentucky bays went for the horizon until it come sailing in so fast you wanted to dodge it like a clothesline. Mame was full of talk and rattled on like a kid about her old home and her school pranks and the things she liked and the hateful ways of those Johnson girls just across the street, 'way up in Indiana. Not a word was said about Ed

Collier or victuals or such solemn subjects. About noon Mame looks and finds that the lunch she had put up in a basket had been left behind. I could have managed quite a collation, but Mame didn't seem to be grieving over nothing to eat, so I made no lamentations. It was a sore subject with me, and I ruled provender in all its branches out of my conversation.

"I am minded to touch light on explanations how I came to lose the way. The road was dim and well grown with grass; and there was Mame by my side confiscating my intellects and attention. The excuses are good or they are not, as they may appear to you. But I lost it, and at dusk that afternoon, when we should have been in Oklahoma City, we were seesawing along the edge of nowhere in some undiscovered river bottom, and the rain was falling in large, wet bunches. Down there in the swamps we saw a little log house on a small knoll of high ground. The bottom grass and the chaparral and the lonesome timber crowded all around it. It seemed to be a melancholy little house, and you felt sorry for it. 'Twas that house for the night, the way I reasoned it. I explained to Mame, and she leaves it to me to decide. She doesn't become galvanic and prosecuting, as most women would, but she says it's all right; she knows I didn't mean to do it.

"We found the house was deserted. It had two empty rooms. There was a little shed in the yard where beasts had once been kept. In a loft of it was a lot of old hay. I put my horses in there and gave them some of it, for which they looked at me sorrowful, expecting apologies. The rest of the hay I carried into the house by armfuls, with a view to accommodations. I also brought in the patent kindler and the Brazilians, neither of which are guaranteed against the action of water.

"Mame and I sat on the wagon seats on the floor, and I lit a lot of the kindler on the hearth, for the night was chilly. If I was any judge, that girl enjoyed it. It was a change for her. It gave her a different point of view. She laughed and talked, and the kindler made a dim light compared to her eyes. I had a pocketful of cigars, and as far as I was concerned there had never been any fall of man. We were at the same old stand in the Garden of Eden. Out there somewhere in the rain and the dark was the river of Zion, and the angel with the flaming sword had not yet put up the keep-off-the-grass sign. I opened up a gross or two of the Brazilians and made Mame put them on--rings, brooches, necklaces, eardrops, bracelets, girdles, and lockets. She flashed and sparkled like a million-dollar princess until she had pink spots in her cheeks and almost cried for a looking-glass.

"When it got late I made a fine bunk on the floor for Mame with the hay and my lap robes and blankets out of the wagon, and persuaded her to lie down. I sat in the other room burning tobacco and listening to

the pouring rain and meditating on the many vicissitudes that came to a man during the seventy years or so immediately preceding his funeral.

"I must have dozed a little while before morning, for my eyes were shut, and when I opened them it was daylight, and there stood Mame with her hair all done up neat and correct, and her eyes bright with admiration of existence.

"Gee whiz, Jeff!" she exclaims, 'but I'm hungry. I could eat a--'

"I looked up and caught her eye. Her smile went back in and she gave me a cold look of suspicion. Then I laughed, and laid down on the floor to laugh easier. It seemed funny to me. By nature and geniality I am a hearty laugher, and I went the limit. When I came to, Mame was sitting with her back to me, all contaminated with dignity.

"Don't be angry, Mame," I says, 'for I couldn't help it. It's the funny way you've done up your hair. If you could only see it!'

"You needn't tell stories, sir," said Mame, cool and advised. 'My hair is all right. I know what you were laughing about. Why, Jeff, look outside,' she winds up, peeping through a chink between the logs. I opened the little wooden window and looked out. The entire river bottom was flooded, and the knob of land on which the house stood was an island in the middle of a rushing stream of yellow water a hundred yards wide. And it was still raining hard. All we could do was to stay there till the doves brought in the olive branch.

"I am bound to admit that conversations and amusements languished during that day. I was aware that Mame was getting a too prolonged one-sided view of things again, but I had no way to change it. Personally, I was wrapped up in the desire to eat. I had hallucinations of hash and visions of ham, and I kept saying to myself all the time, 'What'll you have to eat, Jeff?--what'll you order now, old man, when the waiter comes?' I picks out to myself all sorts of favourites from the bill of fare, and imagines them coming. I guess it's that way with all hungry men. They can't get their cogitations trained on anything but something to eat. It shows that the little table with the broken-legged caster and the imitation Worcester sauce and the napkin covering up the coffee stains is the paramount issue, after all, instead of the question of immortality or peace between nations.

"I sat there, musing along, arguing with myself quite heated as to how I'd have my steak--with mushrooms, or /a la creole/. Mame was on the other seat, pensive, her head leaning on her hand. 'Let the potatoes come home-fried,' I states in my mind, 'and brown the hash in the pan,

with nine poached eggs on the side.' I felt, careful, in my own pockets to see if I could find a peanut or a grain or two of popcorn.

"Night came on again with the river still rising and the rain still falling. I looked at Mame and I noticed that desperate look on her face that a girl always wears when she passes an ice-cream lair. I knew that poor girl was hungry--maybe for the first time in her life. There was that anxious look in her eye that a woman has only when she has missed a meal or feels her skirt coming unfastened in the back.

"It was about eleven o'clock or so on the second night when we sat, gloomy, in our shipwrecked cabin. I kept jerking my mind away from the subject of food, but it kept flopping back again before I could fasten it. I thought of everything good to eat I had ever heard of. I went away back to my kidhood and remembered the hot biscuit sopped in sorghum and bacon gravy with partiality and respect. Then I trailed along up the years, pausing at green apples and salt, flapjacks and maple, lye hominy, fried chicken Old Virginia style, corn on the cob, spareribs and sweet potato pie, and wound up with Georgia Brunswick stew, which is the top notch of good things to eat, because it comprises 'em all.

"They say a drowning man sees a panorama of his whole life pass before him. Well, when a man's starving he sees the ghost of every meal he ever ate set out before him, and he invents new dishes that would make the fortune of a chef. If somebody would collect the last words of men who starved to death, they'd have to sift 'em mighty fine to discover the sentiment, but they'd compile into a cook book that would sell into the millions.

"I guess I must have had my conscience pretty well inflicted with culinary meditations, for, without intending to do so, I says, out loud, to the imaginary waiter, 'Cut it thick and have it rare, with the French fried, and six, soft-scrambled, on toast.'

"Mame turned her head quick as a wing. Her eyes were sparkling and she smiled sudden.

"'Medium for me,' she rattles out, 'with the Juliennes, and three, straight up. Draw one, and brown the wheats, double order to come. Oh, Jeff, wouldn't it be glorious! And then I'd like to have a half fry, and a little chicken curried with rice, and a cup custard with ice cream, and--'

"'Go easy,' I interrupts; 'where's the chicken liver pie, and the kidney /saute/ on toast, and the roast lamb, and--'

"'Oh,' cuts in Mame, all excited, 'with mint sauce, and the turkey

salad, and stuffed olives, and raspberry tarts, and--'

'''Keep it going,' says I. 'Hurry up with the fried squash, and the hot corn pone with sweet milk, and don't forget the apple dumpling with hard sauce, and the cross-barred dew-berry pie--'

"Yes, for ten minutes we kept up that kind of restaurant repartee. We ranges up and down and backward and forward over the main trunk lines and the branches of the victual subject, and Mame leads the game, for she is apprised in the ramifications of grub, and the dishes she nominates aggravates my yearnings. It seems that there is a feeling that Mame will line up friendly again with food. It seems that she looks upon the obnoxious science of eating with less contempt than before.

"The next morning we find that the flood has subsided. I geared up the bays, and we splashed out through the mud, some precarious, until we found the road again. We were only a few miles wrong, and in two hours we were in Oklahoma City. The first thing we saw was a big restaurant sign, and we piled into there in a hurry. Here I finds myself sitting with Mame at table, with knives and forks and plates between us, and she not scornful, but smiling with starvation and sweetness.

'''Twas a new restaurant and well stocked. I designated a list of quotations from the bill of fare that made the waiter look out toward the wagon to see how many more might be coming.

"There we were, and there was the order being served. 'Twas a banquet for a dozen, but we felt like a dozen. I looked across the table at Mame and smiled, for I had recollections. Mame was looking at the table like a boy looks at his first stem-winder. Then she looked at me, straight in the face, and two big tears came in her eyes. The waiter was gone after more grub.

'''Jeff,' she says, soft like, 'I've been a foolish girl. I've looked at things from the wrong side. I never felt this way before. Men get hungry every day like this, don't they? They're big and strong, and they do the hard work of the world, and they don't eat just to spite silly waiter girls in restaurants, do they, Jeff? You said once--that is, you asked me--you wanted me to--well, Jeff, if you still care--I'd be glad and willing to have you always sitting across the table from me. Now give me something to eat, quick, please.'

"So, as I've said, a woman needs to change her point of view now and then. They get tired of the same old sights--the same old dinner table, washtub, and sewing machine. Give 'em a touch of the various--a little travel and a little rest, a little tomfoolery along with the tragedies of keeping house, a little petting after the blowing-up, a

little upsetting and a little jostling around--and everybody in the game will have chips added to their stack by the play."



Fabre

## THUNDER AND THE LIGHTNING-ROD

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Story-book of Science*, by Jean-Henri Fabre

"BY their clever researches, Franklin, de Romas, and many others have revealed to us the nature of lightning; they have taught us, in particular, that when its quantity is small, it leaps to meet one's finger in bright, crackling sparks, without danger to the experimenter, and that all bodies containing it attract neighboring light substances, just as the kite-string attracted the straws in the experiment made by de Romas, and just as sealing-wax and rubbed paper attract the down of feathers. In short, they taught us that electricity is the cause of thunder.

"Now there are two distinct kinds of electricity, which are present in equal quantities in all bodies. As long as they are united, nothing betrays their presence; it is as if they did not exist. But, once separated, they seek each other across all obstacles, attract each other, and rush toward each other with an explosion and a flash of light. Then all is in complete repose until these two electric principles are again separated. The two electricities, therefore, supplement and neutralize each other; that is to say, they form something invisible, inoffensive, inert, that is found everywhere and is called neutral electricity. To electrify a body is to decompose its neutral electricity, to disunite the two principles which, when mixed, remain inert, but, separated from each other, manifest their wonderful properties and their violent tendency to recombination. Rubbing is one

way of effecting the separation of the two electric principles, but it is far from being the only one. Every radical change in the inmost nature of a body also causes a manifestation of the two electricities. So clouds, which are water changed into vapor by the sun's heat, are often found to be electrified.

"When two differently electrified clouds come near together, immediately their contrary electricities run toward each other to recombine, and with a loud report there is a burst of flame that throws a bright and sudden light. This light is lightning; this burst of flame is a thunderbolt; the noise of the explosion is thunder. Finally, the electric spark can dart from a cloud electrified in one way to a spot on the ground electrified in the other.

"Generally you know a thunderbolt only by the sudden illumination it produces and the crash of its explosion. To see the thunderbolt itself you must overcome an unwarranted fear and look attentively at the clouds, the center of the storm. From moment to moment you can see a dazzling streak of light, simple or ramified, and of very irregular sinuous shape. A glowing furnace, metals at white heat, have not its brilliancy; the sun alone furnishes a comparison worthy the sovereign splendor of the thunderbolt."

"I saw the thunderbolt," put in Jules, "when it struck the big pine the day of the storm. For a moment I was blinded by its brightness, as if I had looked the sun full in the face."

"The next storm," said Emile, "I will watch the sky to see the ribbon of fire, but on condition that uncle is there. I should not dare to alone; it is so terrible."

"I, too," added Claire, "will do my best to overcome my fear, if Uncle is only there."

"I will be there, my children," their uncle promised them, "if my presence reassures you, for it is a most imposing sight, that of a stormy sky set on fire by lightning and full of the rumbling of the thunder. And yet, when from the bosom of the clouds there comes the dazzling flash of the thunderbolt and the whole region echoes with the crash of the explosion, a foolish fear dominates you; admiration has no further place in your mind, and your terrified eyes close at the magnificence of the electrical phenomena of the atmosphere, proclaiming with so much eloquence the majesty of the works of God. From your heart, congealed with fear, there comes no outburst of gratitude, for you do not know that at this moment, in the flashes of lightning, the uproar of the shower, of the thunder, and of the unchained winds, a great providential act is being accomplished. Thunder, in fact, is far more the cause of life than of death. In spite of the terrible but rare

accidents that it causes, obeying in that the inscrutable decrees of God, it is one of the most powerful means that Providence employs to render the atmosphere wholesome, to clear the air we breathe of the deadly exhalations engendered by decay. We burn straw and paper torches in our rooms to purify the air; with its immense sheets of flame the thunderbolt produces an analogous effect in the surrounding atmosphere. Each of those lightning flashes that make you start with fear is a pledge of general salubrity; each of those claps of thunder that freeze you with fear is a sign of the great work of purification that is operating in favor of life. And who does not know with what delight, after a storm, the breast fills itself with pure air, when the atmosphere, purified by the fires of the thunderbolt, gives new life to all that breathe it! Let us beware then of a foolish terror when it thunders, but lift up our thoughts to God, from whom the thunder and the lightning have received their salutary mission.

“The thunderbolt, like everything in this world, plays a part in accord with the general well-being; but, again, like everything else, it can, in fulfilling the hidden purposes of an all-seeing Providence, cause here and there a rare accident that makes us forget the immense service it renders us. Let us always remember that nothing happens without the permission of our heavenly Father. A reverent fear of God ought to exclude all other fear. Let us, then, calmly examine the danger that a thunderbolt exposes us to. Let us remember above all that a thunderbolt by preference strikes the most prominent points of ground, for it is there that the opposite electricity, attracted by that of the storm-cloud, is present in greatest abundance, ready to unite with that which attracts it.”

“The two electricities seeking reunion do their utmost to meet,” said Claire, to fix the facts in her mind. “That of the ground, in its effort to reach the cloud, gains the top of a tall tree; that of the cloud, on its side, is impelled downward toward the tree. Then comes the moment when the two electricities, still attracting each other but no longer having a road open for their peaceful reunion, rush together with a crash. Then the streak of fire can’t help reaching the tree. Is that it, Uncle!”

“My dear child, I could not have put it better myself. That is why, in fact, high buildings, towers, steeples, tall trees, are the points most exposed to fire from heaven. In the open country it would be very imprudent, during a storm to seek refuge from rain under a tree, especially a tall and isolated one. If the thunderbolt is to fall in the neighborhood, it will preferably be upon that tree, which forms a high point where the electricity of the ground accumulates, to get as near as possible to that of the cloud attracting it. The sad and deplorable instances every year of persons struck by lightning are for the most part confined to the imprudent who seek shelter from the rain under a



tall tree.”

“If you had not known about these things, Uncle,” Jules here remarked, “we should have been killed the day of the storm, when I wanted to get under the tall pine-tree.”

“It is very doubtful whether the thunderbolt, in destroying the tree, would have spared us. It is impious boldness to expose one’s self to peril without a motive, and then to throw upon Providence the task of extricating us from our perilous situation. Heaven will help him who helps himself. We helped ourselves by fleeing from the dangerous tree, and we arrived home safe. But to help oneself effectively requires knowledge; so, to impress these things well on your mind, I emphasize once more the danger that, in time of storm, lurks in high towers, steeples, lofty buildings, and, above all, in tall and isolated trees. As for other precautions that are commonly recommended, such as not to run, in order not to cause a violent displacement of the air, and to shut the doors and windows in order to prevent a draught, they are of no value whatever: the direction taken by the thunderbolt is in no way affected by the air-currents. Railway trains, which run at high speed and displace the air with so much violence, are not more exposed to lightning than objects at rest. Every-day experience is a proof of it.”

“When it thunders,” said Emile, “Mother Ambrosine hurries to shut all the doors and windows.”

“Mother Ambrosine is like a great many others who believe they are safe as soon as they cease to see the peril. They shut themselves up so as not to hear the thunder nor see the lightning; but that does not in the least lessen the danger.”

“Then there are no precautions to be taken!” asked Jules.

“In the usual circumstances, none, unless it be this precaution: to be of good heart and rely on the will of God.

“To protect tall buildings, more menaced than others, we use a lightning-conductor, a wonderful invention due to Franklin’s genius. The lightning-conductor is composed of a rod of iron, long, strong, and pointed, fastened to the top of the building. From its base starts another rod, also of iron, which runs along the roofs and walls, where it is fastened with staples, and plunges into damp ground or, better still, into a deep well of water. If a thunderbolt falls, it strikes the lightning-conductor, which is the nearest object to the cloud as well as the best suited to the electric current on account of its metallic nature. Besides, its pointed form has much to do with its efficacy. The bolt that strikes the metal lightning-conductor follows it and is dissipated in the depths of the earth without causing any damage.”



## THE GIRL

by Albert Mockel.

1866--

The Project Gutenberg eBook, *Contemporary Belgian Poetry*, by Various

Slender, and so virginal, but why not somewhat languid?--her casque of golden hair is starred sometimes with mellow sparks, and mellow is her mauve silk dress soft in its folds.

She is all music, in the music of her movements bathed, they also soft with pensive grace, and very slow with suppleness that undulatingly unrolls.

An evening party. She has danced, she dances still. Men dark and fair have come and led her off, under the chandeliers in this insipid music,--insipid, and amusing her. Much has she danced (O all this light!) and feels a little weary, weary. Yes, several waltzes; of her partners one could talk, or nearly could;--but he is ugly, and his fish eyes middle-class. The other, on her programme next, is far more handsome, surely: his keen eyes have metallic glints, his hair is glossy black; he is Italian, is he not, or else from Hungary?

Ah! here he comes.

Two heads incline, she takes an arm: they waltz.

This waltz, it rolls with a voluptuous rhythm, in harmony with the rhythm of the Girl, like convoluted masses, musically vaporous and very heavy, volutas without end and curve on curve. They dance, their curves leave traces of caresses in the air, their undulations are a most lascivious music. She? she is very tired, she has no strength as on her

cavalier she leans! her thought is vague, so vague along the twining curves, vague in volutas without end, and with the contours of their curves. These curves are turning round lasciviously; she thinks no more, she turns, she turns, she undulates in air and in the music's kisses, tickled by something drunken, by this air which brushes her, this ball:--she shivers.

Now nothing more, her eyes see nothing; things that turn, vague things, volutas vague without an end, and curves that drag her on in velvet rhythms. But all the things around her turn too vaguely, too vaguely cycles turn barbaric, mad; all of it turning, turning; and if she look again she will be sure to fall!...

The waltz continues and lasciviously rolls, rolls in the dizziness of turning things, mad cycles, and all this softness, curves that languish fit to swoon! Feverishly and to flee the crazy dizziness of all these vague and circumambient things, as if to save her life she keeps her look on him.--He plunges his deep down into the great vague eyes before him, until he sets them shuddering ... This man, his eyes are shining; strangely beautiful, they shine with gleams fantastic, and from their fluid comes perverted charm, burning and dominating, almost animal, and with a glaucous glint that troubles her ...

This well-nigh bestial look upon a somewhat pensive, handsome face.... And it is she, she ... Ashamed, in spite of all her dizziness, she takes away her eyes from him who seeks to conquer her. But all is turning, all these things, these vague things turning, turning O too much! she shuts her eyes to see them not, she could not open them again, the rhythms bear her onward crossing one another, brushing some lascivious curve again, the vagueness, O such vagueness of the crazy cycles and lascivious curves that ravish her. Delicate titillation like a feather's sudden touch electrifies her, half-fainting and surrendering she floats like flotsam on his arm; this arm, that like a very soft and powerful billow bears and cradles her; sweetly, irresistibly caresses her, bearing her onward, circling her with a voluptuous embrace, and ... no, no! his eyes through her closed lids she feels them, and their glaucous flame that pierces, conquers her. This glaucous look, this virile and determined look, it weighs upon her, haunting the soft eddyings of the waltz,--and is not this a breath that brushes her, the stifled warmth of a desiring breath, man's breath on her neck....

But the waltz bears her on in whirling, vague, voluptuousness.



Ambrus

## MÁLI NÉNI. (MISZTÉRIUM HÁROM RÉSZBEN.)

The Project Gutenberg eBook, *Álomvilág*, by Zoltán Ambrus

### ELSŐ RÉSZ.

Mayer kis hivatalnok volt a Kiskereskedők Takaré- és Hitelszövetkezeténél. Mayer igen szelid erkölcsöknek örvendett. Mayernek nem volt egyebe, csak egy mélabús kanári madara, s egy szép olajzöld őszi felöltője. Mayer egy porszem volt a világegyetemben.

Egy szép reggel Mayert az igazgató behívatta a szövetkezet józsefvárosi fiókjának legbelső szobájába. Barátságosan kezet nyújtott neki, s szokatlanul ünnepies hangon szólalván meg, rövid szónoklatot intézett hozzá, a mely szónoklatot még Mayerhez mérten is kicsinynek kell vallanunk a nyilvánosság előtt.

Ebben a kicsiny szónoklatban, a terjedelemhez képest, igen sok volt a »tekintettel« és a »miszerint«. Benne volt továbbá a pénzpiacz adott viszonyainak körültekintő mérlegelése s dióhéjban az egész jövő évi költségelőirányzat. De benne volt végre az az örömdetes hír is, hogy az igazgatóság, tekintetbe véve minden tekintetbe veendő, Mayert kinevezni méltóztatott az intézet harmadik könyvvezetőjévé, nyolczszáz forint évi fizetéssel és százhatvan forint lakáspénzzel.

Az öröm nem öl. Mayer savószínű arcza, a gyors előmenetelhez képest, hirtelen érdekes, előkelő halványságot öltött; de ez volt az egész. Maga is csodálkozva vette észre, hogy ugyanazon a hangon rebeg köszönetet, mint a melyen előbb beszélt, mikor még nem volt ilyen nagy hivatalban.

Mayernak a kartársai, hasonló, kivételes helyzetekben, igen nagy bolondságokat szoktak elkövetni. A megfontolt Kohn tavaly ilyenkor sört fizetett az egész osztálynak; ő maga keveset ivott a sörből s mégis fájós fejjel ment haza. A könnyelmű Varga pedig a januári előléptetéskor elment egy mulatóba, majd egylovasra ült s kihajtatott éjjel a városligetbe, és végül reggel, jóval kapunyitás után ballagott fel a lakására. Mindezek bizonyára igen nagy balgatagságok voltak; de Mayert még jobban megbolondította a hirtelen öröm. Ismétlem, Mayer igen szelid erkölcsű fiatal ember volt; s az ilyenek, ha megkötyagosodnak, nem igen ismernek határt a bolondságban.

Mayer azt cselekedte, hogy kiment a Felső-Erdősor 179. számú házába s ott fölment a negyedik emeletre; feljebb már nem mehetett, mert feljebb már nem voltak lakások. Mayer egy idő óta gyakran megjelent ezen a minden világi zajtól messzeeső magaslaton; s ilyenkor három kisasszony közül mindig a legkisebbik nyitott neki ajtót.

Ez a kisasszony mindig kockás ruhában járt, nagyon szépen tudott mosolyogni s némi hasonlatosságokat fedezett fel Mayer és Orlando gróf között, a kiről sokat olvasott. Egyebet nem igen érdemes róla feljegyeznünk, mert igen elmosódó szerepe lesz történetünkben.

Ellenben jegyezzük fel, hogy szebb időt már képzelni se lehetett, és hogy az ablakok nyitva voltak. A szomszéd kertben két orgona-bokor oly szertelenül illatozott, mintha csak a Zola Emil regényéből ültették volna ide. A közeli kávéházban zene szólott. Azt játszotta, hogy:

Mi két szeretők vagyunk,  
A ki' bujdos' a világba'...

Ez a hiányjeles költészet mámorítóan hangzott. És Mayer, hetven forinttal a zsebében, a fejébe vette, hogy ő a Rózsaszinü herczeg.

Ah igen, ez tündéri délután volt. A Felső-Erdősor 179. számú házában negyedik emeletén megcsendült a szerelem dala. De, szokás szerint, ennek a dalnak ismét csak bús volt a vége. Mert Mayer földöntúli megindultságában megkérte a kockás ruhás kisasszony kezét.

Paolo Mantegazza ur, az ő kábitóan tudományos és ingerlően szellemes fejtegetéseiben, szép párhuzamba állítva a nő szerelmét a férfiével, konok és kétségbeejtő bizonyossággal állapította meg az utóbbinak erkölcsi felsőbbbségét. Mégis, úgy tetszik, mindenre kiterjedő figyelmét elkerülte egy tapasztalat, mely minden kétséget kizáró ékesszólással szól a tétel mellett.

Ez a tapasztalat az, hogy míg a férfi szerelme minduntalan súrolja a nemes örültséget, a nőé folyton-folyvást igyekszik a nyárspolgári

józanság kikötője felé.

Ha a koczkás ruhás kisasszony szerelme épp oly mély, épp oly magas, épp oly határtalan lett volna, mint a szerelem szaktudósai, élükön a bolygó hollandival, minden Sentától hiába várják, akkor bizonyára így kellett volna szólnia a megbomlott Mayerhez:

– Nem megyek önhöz feleségül, mert szeretem önt. Ha feleségül mennék önhöz, még nagyobb szegénység várna önre s még nehezebbé tenném az életét. De én szeretem önt s meg akarom óvni a szegény családfők apró nyomorúságaitól. Váljunk el szépen egy barátságos kézszorítással. Becsüljük egymást a távolból s egy-egy szép, júniusi estén gondoljunk néha első, utolsó, egyszeri szerelmünkre.

De a koczkás ruhás leány nem tudott fölemelkedni erre az erkölcsi magaslatra. Azt mondta, hogy: »igen« s nagyon szépen mosolygott.

Mayer másnap reggel szerette volna a fejét a falba verni. De becsületes ember volt, s tudta, hogy ezt nem szabad tennie. Megelégedett tehát azzal, hogy megvakarta egy kisé.

Aztán kettőzött éberséggel figyelt a pénzpiacznak makacsul állandó s aggasztóan szigorú viszonyaira.

November elsejére fölvelt egy kétszobás lakást, november másodikán átvitte új otthonába őszi felöltőjét és kanári madarát, szemrehányóan nézett rá, s november harmadikán megesküdt a koczkás ruhás lánynyal.

A koczkás ruhás hölgy, a ki iránt, ismételjük, ne tessék érdeklődni, nem vitt magával az új lakásba egyebet, csak a Dunbar Fáni szoknyáját, mosolyát, mely egyetlen volt e kerek világon, és Máli nénit.

Ez a Máli néni egy öreg cseléd volt, a ki ott szolgált már a koczkás ruhás hölgy nagyanyjánál is. Azt mondhatnók: a házban vénült meg, ha a ház is megvénült volna Máli nénivel. De a ház nem volt ilyen hűséges természetű; ellenkezőleg, sietett idegen kézre jutni, s nem élni másutt, csak szép emlékezetben. A nagy család is pusztult, sorvadt egyre. Nemzedékek haltak ki; ifjak, leányok vándoroltak el szép rendben a temetőbe, csak Máli néni maradt meg tüneményes változatlanságban, mint egy oszlop, a melyre új és új, gyenge folyondárok kapaszkodnak.

Mayer nem sokat ügyelt Máli nénire, s eleinte nem vette észre, hogy a család a legkisebbik lánynyal odaadta neki a családi klenódiumot is. Mayer egyáltalában nem igen ügyelhetett a konyhájára; nagyon elfoglalták az egyenlegei.

Alig ért rá megnézni: vajon a felesége tud-e még olyan szépen mosolyogni, mint azelőtt? Ha ő sem látta meg, én bizony nem merek

megesküdni, vajon nem halványodott-e meg egy kissé az a kedves, igéző mosoly. Istenem, Orlando gróf oly pokoli hidegvérrel veszt el a kártyaasztalnál ötezer font sterlinget, és Mayer oly keserves ábrázattal nyögte ki azt a légies konyhapénzt! Annyit azonban tudok, hogy egészen nem szűnt meg mosolyogni. Sőt néha magában is mosolygott, szegényke, valami kicsiny, ismeretlen célú varrásra hajolva.

Ezenközben Mayer nagyban viaskodott azokkal a láthatatlan, gonosz szellemekkel, a melyekről az összes népek hitregéi megfejtkeztek, s melyeket a közbeszédben apró adósságoknak szoktak nevezni. Néha csodálta, hogy még megvan, s szabadon rendelkezik a kezével, lábával. Mayer nem szeretett a közügyekkel foglalkozni, de egyet nagyra tartott az új idők vívmányaiból, azt, hogy a haladottabb kor eltörülte az adósok börtönét.

S mialatt, kiindulván ebből a Cartesiusra emlékeztető megfigyelésből, hogy: »Adósságom van, tehát létezem«, eltűnődött e meglepő folytonosságon, lassankint észre vette végre a konyhában sertepertelő Máli nénit. Be kellett látnia, hogy ennek az öreg cselédnek jelentékeny része van benne, ha ő még folyvást megfigyeléseket tehet önmagán s a rajta kívül lévő dolgokon. Mert Máli néni azzal az adománynyal dicsekedhetett, a melyet a régiek leginkább bámultak: négy kenyérből négyezer kenyérnyit tudott szétosztani. Viszont fizetséget épp oly kevésbé fogadott el a Mayer-családtól, mint hajdan az uraságtól. Három fiatal cseléd helyett dolgozott, s a tiszteletdíja az volt, hogy Mayer koronkint bizalmas beszélgetésbe ereszkedett vele.

Mayer nem volt rossz ember, s úgy gondolkozott, hogy Máli néninek bőséges kárpótlást fog adni mindjárt az első jó napokban. De a jó napoknak megvan az a rossz szokásuk, hogy nagyon késlekedve jönnek, s Mayer egy évi várakozás után csak a még rosszabb napokat ismerhette meg.

Ezekben a még rosszabb napokban az történt, hogy a jó Isten oda fenn így rendelkezett:

Elég Mayer van már a világon, arra az új kis Mayerre nincsen semmi szükség.

A szegény kis Mayerné ellenkező véleményen volt, mint a mindenség ura. S ennek a nagyon egyenlőtlen vélemény-különbségnek az lett a vége, hogy az új kis Mayerre csakugyan nem lett szükség s a szegény kis Mayerné örökre megszűnt mosolyogni.

Máli néni sírva gyalogolt ki a nagy koporsó meg a kis koporsó után a németvölgyi temetőbe, aztán elbúcsúzott Mayertől s visszaköltözött a haldokló családhoz, a negyedik emeletre.



Boylesve

## LE MAÎTRE

A Abel Bonnard.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Le Dangereux Jeune Homme*, by René Boylesve

Suzon Despoix était une singulière personne. A vingt-deux ans, fille encore, attendu son défaut de dot, et orpheline, elle habitait une pension de famille, rue du Ranelagh, et gagnait elle-même sa vie en donnant des leçons de piano, de chant, voire de grammaire française et d'anglais, ce qui suppose une assez grande activité.

Qu'on n' imagine point, pour cela, une Suzon d'humeur chagrine, une coureuse de cachet gémissante et aspirant à bouleverser l'état social. Suzon travaillait douze heures par jour et du peu de temps qui lui restait elle faisait une récréation en se montrant alors le plus joyeux et le plus spirituel boute-en-train.

A cause de ce caractère heureux et de son talent de pianiste, on l'invitait beaucoup. Elle passait presque toutes ses soirées en ville; elle avait, à sa Maison de famille, une autorisation spéciale, la vie pour elle étant subordonnée aux relations qu'elle se pouvait faire.

J'ai connu Suzon Despoix; je l'ai rencontrée dans plusieurs maisons et je me porte garant qu'elle était la plus honnête et, à tous les points de vue, la plus intéressante fille du monde.

Non pas jolie heureusement pour elle, mon Dieu! il fallait avoir deviné en elle une âme très exceptionnelle pour lui accorder toute l'attention qu'elle méritait. Mais une fois qu'on lui avait pu parler à coeur ouvert, on était gagné par un regard qu'elle avait, par un je ne sais quoi situé aux environs de la narine et de la bouche, qui était comme la



signature des dieux.

Cette Suzon était rare, douée à miracle; et pour dire d'elle ce qu'on se permet trop facilement en faveur de quiconque s'élève d'une semelle au-dessus de la médiocrité: c'était quelqu'un.

Un soir, chez des amis que je ne puis nommer, des gens charmants, cela va sans dire, j'ai vu la petite Suzon Despoix mise en un embarras et sortir de cet embarras d'une manière qui me paraît digne d'être rapportée.

\* \* \* \* \*

Elle avait chanté tout d'abord ce \_Noël\_ de Debussy, si poignant et si simple, qui fit verser des larmes durant la guerre: \_Nous n'avons plus de maison; l'ennemi nous a tout pris, tout pris\_, etc... Sa voix n'avait rien d'extraordinaire; mais l'intelligence et le coeur, comme toutes les choses d'ordre moral, sont bien plus puissants que les dons physiques à subjuguer le monde, et les auditeurs avaient frissonné, l'horreur avait été évoquée par la plus expressive image, et une grande pitié était née chez chacun pour tous les gens qui souffrent. Il sembla un moment que pas un des êtres qui venaient d'être secoués là ne fût capable désormais ni de commettre une injustice, ni de manquer à la générosité. Et je me perdais en considérations, avec un voisin de fauteuil, sur les courants bienfaisants qui passent ainsi parfois sur l'humanité et, Dieu me pardonne! semblent de forces à la rendre meilleure.

Là-dessus, notre Suzon, auréolée de son succès, fut suppliée de rester au piano.

Alors elle joua ce qu'elle possédait le mieux, ou, plus exactement, quand il s'agit d'une nature de cette sorte, ce qui la possédait davantage. Elle aimait Chopin comme d'amour; il ne se passait pas de jour qu'elle ne lui consacraît une heure ou davantage; encore n'osait elle se risquer à donner de lui qu'un nombre de pages assez réduit.

Elle débuta par une «polonaise» qui étonna des musiciens présents. Puis, elle exécuta la cinquième valse, puis un nocturne dont je ne me rappelle pas le nombre ordinal, et, enfin en tout cas, le premier, où elle croyait, disait-elle, reconnaître la voix de l'étrange génie musical mourant et résumant en une phrase désolée sa destinée incompréhensible.

On fut stupéfait. Les gens allaient de l'un à l'autre disant: «Avec qui cette petite a-t-elle étudié?» La plupart ne savaient même pas, jusque-là, qu'elle eût du talent. On s'était contenté de constater qu'elle animait la compagnie.

Quelque malin ayant dit: «C'est le jeu d'Un Tel», le bruit se répandit

qu'elle était l'élève de ce maître. On demanda à Suzon:

--Le voyez-vous souvent?

--Qui ça?

--Mais, Un Tel.

--Un Tel? Connais pas.

Elle ne connaissait pas Un Tel; on avait été dirigé sur une mauvaise piste. On en découvrit sur-le-champ une autre. Suzon la rompit instantanément.

Elle n'osait pas dire, connaissant son monde, qu'elle n'avait pas eu de maître. A la vérité, elle avait été commencée par son père, homme complètement inconnu, et, depuis lors, elle interprétait Chopin selon sa propre fantaisie, à son goût, avec passion il est vrai, et secondée qu'elle était par un tempérament original, toutes choses qui n'ont pas de valeur aux yeux du public quand elles ne sont point étayées d'une autorité incontestée, ou rendues croyables par la vertu d'un initiateur de grand nom. On ajoute peu de foi aux dons spontanés; on s'incline devant le travail, la mémoire; notre manie égalitaire ne nous permet de foi qu'en les choses qui s'apprennent; nous sommes au siècle de l'École et non plus à celui des Fées.

Une jeune fille, avec elle assez familière, s'approcha de Suzon Despoix et lui parla à l'oreille:

--Tu es épatante, ma chère! mais, là, sans blague, dis-moi: est-ce qu'on peut prendre des leçons avec \_lui\_?

--Avec qui? dit innocemment Suzon.

--Allons, ne te fiche pas du monde, ma petite: tu as un professeur... tu as un ami...

Ce «tu as un ami», prononcé avec une certaine vivacité, fut entendu. Il fut répété. Il courut le salon. Les uns ajoutaient: «Chut!... chut!... c'est un mystère...» Et les autres: «N'insistons pas, de peur de faire tort à la petite Despoix; elle a un ami...»

Une \_Étude\_, réclamée par l'assistance enthousiaste, fut troublée par les bavardages. Quand la pauvre Suzon détacha sa dernière note, comme une perle au reflet mélancolique, il était avéré, tant les imaginations vont vite, que cette pauvre fille était la maîtresse d'un pianiste tchéco-slovaque depuis deux ans à Paris, et seul capable d'approcher à tel point de l'âme de l'incomparable Polonais. Les relations de la

petite Despoix et de cet étranger étaient suspectes, à n'en pas douter.  
Sans quoi pourquoi ne les eût-elle pas avouées?

La maîtresse de maison, émue, vint à Suzon, lui fit comprendre doucement le danger couru et la supplia, afin d'éviter les fâcheuses interprétations, de confesser le nom de son maître.

--Mais, madame, dit Suzon, je n'en ai pas! J'ai dit la vérité.

--La vérité est souvent peu vraisemblable, ma chère enfant!

Suzon réfléchit.

Elle saisissait parfaitement le cas et en prévoyait toutes les conséquences. On lui demandait en somme de mentir. Sa nature, très nette, répugnait à un tel moyen de se tirer d'affaire. Mais son humeur heureuse fut tentée par l'occasion qui lui était en réalité imposée de raconter une bouffonnerie énorme. Alors, elle eut tôt fait de prendre son parti:

--Vous voulez le savoir? dit-elle. Eh bien! voilà: mon maître est Vassili-Vassiliévitch.

Un soupir de soulagement s'échappa de l'assistance. Personne ne connaissait, cela va sans dire, Vassili-Vassiliévitch. Mais dès l'instant qu'on était informé que Suzon ne tirait pas son talent d'elle-même, un maître, quel qu'il fût, était non seulement agréé, mais illustré d'emblée par son élève.

Suzon, devenue grave, semblait penser au fantôme Vassili-Vassiliévitch:

--Le pauvre! dit-elle, il a été tué dans l'offensive de Broussilov...  
Oui, c'était un Russe...

--Il a été tué! Quel malheur! s'écria-t-on de toute part.

--Oh! Il serait devenu bolchevik, dit Suzon: il avait bien mauvaise tête...

--Ce n'est pas sûr!... Mais, pourquoi ne le nommiez-vous pas, mademoiselle?

--Parce que je ne peux m'empêcher de le voir un couteau entre les dents, et zigouillant tout, à la ronde...

Et, pour ne pas pouffer de rire, elle mimait, les yeux exorbités, le poing haut, un terrifiant Vassili-Vassiliévitch.

--Allons! allons! mademoiselle. Ce qu'il y a de certain, c'est que le pauvre garçon devait avoir un fier talent!

--Prenez tout de même garde, dit une personne prudente, lorsqu'il s'agira de vous choisir un nouveau maître!...

--J'y pense! dit Suzon, et, pour ma sécurité personnelle, je ferais mieux peut-être de m'en passer?...

--Hélas! ma belle enfant, on ne fait rien sans risques: pour votre carrière, prenez-en un! prenez-en un, quel qu'il soit!

Quelqu'un, et non des moindres de la compagnie, opina toutefois qu'au point où la petite en était, elle pourrait se passer d'un maître.

Et, de l'un à l'autre, on se consultait. Les opinions se résumèrent finalement en ce propos:

--Au fait, elle en a eu un. Elle en a eu un excellent.

Grâce à une invention mensongère, l'opinion publique, en ses exigences profondes, était satisfaite.

Ainsi se termina, heureusement, la soirée qui avait failli mal tourner pour Suzon Despoix. Et celle-ci s'en alla, pauvre comme devant, prendre son tram 16 pour Passy, méditant en souriant au prix fabuleux qu'il lui faudrait taxer, la prochaine fois, les leçons de son ex-professeur, Vassili-Vassiliévitch.



## PROJECT HUSH

By William Tenn

[Transcriber Note: This Project Gutenberg etext was produced from *Galaxy Science Fiction* February 1954. Extensive research did not uncover any evidence that the U.S. copyright on this publication was renewed.]

*The biggest job in history and it had to be done with complete secrecy. It was--which was just the trouble!*

I guess I'm just a stickler, a perfectionist, but if you do a thing, I always say, you might as well do it right. Everything satisfied me about the security measures on our assignment except one--the official Army designation.

Project Hush.

I don't know who thought it up, and I certainly would never ask, but whoever it was, he should have known better. Damn it, when you want a project kept secret, you \_don't\_ give it a designation like that! You give it something neutral, some name like the Manhattan and Overlord they used in World War II, which won't excite anybody's curiosity.

But we were stuck with Project Hush and we had to take extra measures to ensure secrecy. A couple of times a week, everyone on the project had to report to Psycho for DD & HA--dream detailing and hypnoanalysis--instead of the usual monthly visit. Naturally, the commanding general of the heavily fortified research post to which we were attached could not ask what we were doing, under penalty of court-martial, but he had to be given further instructions to shut off his imagination like a faucet every time he heard an explosion. Some idiot in Washington was actually going to list Project Hush in the military budget by name! It took fast action, I can tell you, to have it entered under Miscellaneous "X" Research.

Well, we'd covered the unforgivable blunder, though not easily, and now we could get down to the real business of the project. You know, of course, about the A-bomb, H-bomb and C-bomb because information that they existed had been declassified. You don't know about the other weapons being devised--and neither did we, reasonably enough, since they weren't our business--but we had been given properly guarded notification that they were in the works. Project Hush was set up to counter the new weapons.

Our goal was not just to reach the Moon. We had done that on 24 June 1967 with an unmanned ship that carried instruments to report back data on soil, temperature, cosmic rays and so on. Unfortunately, it was put out of commission by a rock slide.

An unmanned rocket would be useless against the new weapons. We had to get to the Moon before any other country did and set up a permanent station--an armed one--and do it without anybody else knowing about it.

I guess you see now why we on (\_damn\_ the name!) Project Hush were so concerned about security. But we felt pretty sure, before we took off, that we had plugged every possible leak.

We had, all right. Nobody even knew we had raised ship.

\* \* \* \* \*

We landed at the northern tip of Mare Nubium, just off Regiomontanus, and, after planting a flag with appropriate throat-catching ceremony, had swung into the realities of the tasks we had practiced on so many dry runs back on Earth. Major Monroe Gridley prepared the big rocket, with its tiny cubicle of living space, for the return journey to Earth which he alone would make.

Lieutenant-colonel Thomas Hawthorne painstakingly examined our provisions and portable quarters for any damage that might have been incurred in landing.

And I, Colonel Benjamin Rice, first commanding officer of Army Base No. 1 on the Moon, dragged crate after enormous crate out of the ship on my aching academic back, and piled them in the spot two hundred feet away where the plastic dome would be built.

We all finished at just about the same time, as per schedule, and went into Phase Two.

Monroe and I started work on building the dome. It was a simple pre-fab affair, but big enough to require an awful lot of assembling. Then, after it was built, we faced the real problem--getting all the complex internal machinery in place and in operating order.

Meanwhile, Tom Hawthorne took his plump self off in the single-seater rocket which, up to then, had doubled as a lifeboat.

The schedule called for him to make a rough three-hour scouting survey in an ever-widening spiral from our dome. This had been regarded as a probable waste of time, rocket fuel and manpower--but a necessary precaution. He was supposed to watch for such things as bug-eyed monsters out for a stroll on the Lunar landscape. Basically, however, Tom's survey was intended to supply extra geological and astronomical meat for the report which Monroe was to carry back to Army HQ on Earth.

Tom was back in forty minutes. His round face, inside its transparent bubble helmet, was fish-belly white. And so were ours, once he told us what he'd seen.

He had seen another dome.

"The other side of Mare Nubium--in the Riphaen Mountains," he babbled excitedly. "It's a little bigger than ours, and it's a little flatter on

top. And it's not translucent, either, with splotches of different colors here and there--it's a dull, dark, heavy gray. But that's all there is to see."

"No markings on the dome?" I asked worriedly. "No signs of anyone--or anything--around it?"

"Neither, Colonel." I noticed he was calling me by my rank for the first time since the trip started, which meant he was saying in effect, "Man, have you got a decision to make!"

"Hey, Tom," Monroe put in. "Couldn't be just a regularly shaped bump in the ground, could it?"

"I'm a geologist, Monroe. I can distinguish artificial from natural topography. Besides--" he looked up--"I just remembered something I left out. There's a brand-new tiny crater near the dome--the kind usually left by a rocket exhaust."

"Rocket exhaust?" I seized on that. "\_Rockets\_, eh?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Tom grinned a little sympathetically. "Spaceship exhaust, I should have said. You can't tell from the crater what kind of propulsive device these characters are using. It's not the same kind of crater our rear-jets leave, if that helps any."

Of course it didn't. So we went into our ship and had a council of war. And I do mean war. Both Tom and Monroe were calling me Colonel in every other sentence. I used their first names every chance I got.

Still, no one but me could reach a decision. About what to do, I mean.

"Look," I said at last, "here are the possibilities. They know we are here--either from watching us land a couple of hours ago or from observing Tom's scout-ship--or they do not know we are here. They are either humans from Earth--in which case they are in all probability enemy nationals--or they are alien creatures from another planet--in which case they may be friends, enemies or what-have-you. I think common sense and standard military procedure demand that we consider them hostile until we have evidence to the contrary. Meanwhile, we proceed with extreme caution, so as not to precipitate an interplanetary war with potentially friendly Martians, or whatever they are.

"All right. It's vitally important that Army Headquarters be informed of this immediately. But since Moon-to-Earth radio is still on the drawing boards, the only way we can get through is to send Monroe back with the

ship. If we do, we run the risk of having our garrison force, Tom and me, captured while he's making the return trip. In that case, their side winds up in possession of important information concerning our personnel and equipment, while our side has only the bare knowledge that somebody or something else has a base on the Moon. So our primary need is more information.

"Therefore, I suggest that I sit in the dome on one end of a telephone hookup with Tom, who will sit in the ship, his hand over the firing button, ready to blast off for Earth the moment he gets the order from me. Monroe will take the single-seater down to the Riphaen Mountains, landing as close to the other dome as he thinks safe. He will then proceed the rest of the way on foot, doing the best scouting job he can in a spacesuit.

"He will not use his radio, except for agreed-upon nonsense syllables to designate landing the single-seater, coming upon the dome by foot, and warning me to tell Tom to take off. If he's captured, remembering that the first purpose of a scout is acquiring and transmitting knowledge of the enemy, he will snap his suit radio on full volume and pass on as much data as time and the enemy's reflexes permit. How does that sound to you?"

They both nodded. As far as they were concerned, the command decision had been made. But I was sitting under two inches of sweat.

"One question," Tom said. "Why did you pick Monroe for the scout?"

"I was afraid you'd ask that," I told him. "We're three extremely unathletic Ph.D.s who have been in the Army since we finished our schooling. There isn't too much choice. But I remembered that Monroe is half Indian--Arapahoe, isn't it, Monroe?--and I'm hoping blood will tell."

"Only trouble, Colonel," Monroe said slowly as he rose, "is that I'm one-fourth Indian and even that.... Didn't I ever tell you that my great-grandfather was the only Arapahoe scout who was with Custer at the Little Big Horn? He'd been positive Sitting Bull was miles away. However, I'll do my best. And if I heroically don't come back, would you please persuade the Security Officer of our section to clear my name for use in the history books? Under the circumstances, I think it's the least he could do."

I promised to do my best, of course.

\* \* \* \* \*

After he took off, I sat in the dome over the telephone connection to



Tom and hated myself for picking Monroe to do the job. But I'd have hated myself just as much for picking Tom. And if anything happened and I had to tell Tom to blast off, I'd probably be sitting here in the dome all by myself after that, waiting....

"\_Broz neggle!\_" came over the radio in Monroe's resonant voice. He had landed the single-seater.

I didn't dare use the telephone to chat with Tom in the ship, for fear I might miss an important word or phrase from our scout. So I sat and sat and strained my ears. After a while, I heard "\_Mishgashu!\_" which told me that Monroe was in the neighborhood of the other dome and was creeping toward it under cover of whatever boulders were around.

And then, abruptly, I heard Monroe yell my name and there was a terrific clattering in my headphones. Radio interference! He'd been caught, and whoever had caught him had simultaneously jammed his suit transmitter with a larger transmitter from the alien dome.

Then there was silence.

After a while, I told Tom what had happened. He just said, "Poor Monroe." I had a good idea of what his expression was like.

"Look, Tom," I said, "if you take off now, you still won't have anything important to tell. After capturing Monroe, whatever's in that other dome will come looking for us, I think. I'll let them get close enough for us to learn something of their appearance--at least if they're human or non-human. Any bit of information about them is important. I'll shout it up to you and you'll still be able to take off in plenty of time. All right?"

"You're the boss, Colonel," he said in a mournful voice. "Lots of luck."

And then there was nothing to do but wait. There was no oxygen system in the dome yet, so I had to squeeze up a sandwich from the food compartment in my suit. I sat there, thinking about the expedition. Nine years, and all that careful secrecy, all that expenditure of money and mind-cracking research--and it had come to this. Waiting to be wiped out, in a blast from some unimaginable weapon. I understood Monroe's last request. We often felt we were so secret that our immediate superiors didn't even want us to know what we were working on. Scientists are people--they wish for recognition, too. I was hoping the whole expedition would be written up in the history books, but it looked unpromising.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two hours later, the scout ship landed near the dome. The lock opened and, from where I stood in the open door of our dome, I saw Monroe come out and walk toward me.

I alerted Tom and told him to listen carefully. "It may be a trick--he might be drugged...."

He didn't act drugged, though--not exactly. He pushed his way past me and sat down on a box to one side of the dome. He put his booted feet up on another, smaller box.

"How are you, Ben?" he asked. "How's every little thing?"

I grunted. "\_ Well?\_" I know my voice skittered a bit.

He pretended puzzlement. "Well \_what\_? Oh, I see what you mean. The other dome--you want to know who's in it. You have a right to be curious, Ben. Certainly. The leader of a top-secret expedition like this--Project Hush they call us, huh, Ben--finds another dome on the Moon. He thinks he's been the first to land on it, so naturally he wants to--"

"Major Monroe Gridley!" I rapped out. "You will come to attention and deliver your report. Now!" Honestly, I felt my neck swelling up inside my helmet.

Monroe just leaned back against the side of the dome. "That's the \_Army\_ way of doing things," he commented admiringly. "Like the recruits say, there's a right way, a wrong way and an Army way. Only there are other ways, too." He chuckled. "Lots of other ways."

"He's off," I heard Tom whisper over the telephone. "Ben, Monroe has gone and blown his stack."

"They aren't extraterrestrials in the other dome, Ben," Monroe volunteered in a sudden burst of sanity. "No, they're human, all right, and from Earth. Guess \_where\_."

"I'll kill you," I warned him. "I swear I'll kill you, Monroe. Where are they from--Russia, China, Argentina?"

He grimaced. "What's so secret about those places? Go on!--guess again."

I stared at him long and hard. "The only place else--"

"Sure," he said. "You got it, Colonel. The other dome is owned and operated by the Navy. The goddam United States Navy!"



## IRRADIATIONS

### XXXVI

from: Project Gutenberg's *Irradiations; Sand and Spray*, by John Gould Fletcher

Like cataracts that crash from a crumbling crag  
Into the dull-blue smouldering gulf of a lake below,  
Landlocked amid the mountains, so my soul  
Was a gorge that was filled with the warring echoes of song.

Of old, they wore  
Shining armour, and banners of broad gold they bore:  
Now they drift, like a wild bird's cry,  
Downwards from chill summits of the sky.  
Fountains of flashing joy were their source afar;  
Now they lie still, to mirror every star.  
In circles of opal, ruby, blue, out-thrown,  
They drift down to a dull, dark monotone.

Pluck the loose strings, singer,  
Thrum the strings;  
For the wind brings distant, drowsy bells of song.  
Loose the plucked string, poet,  
Spurn the strings,  
For the echoes of memory float through the gulf for long.

My songs seem now one humming note afar:  
Light as ether, quivering 'twixt star and star,  
But yet, so still  
I know not whence they come, if mine they are.  
Yet that low note  
Increases in force as if it said, "I will":  
Kindled by God's fierce breath, it would the whole world fill.  
Till steadily outwards thrown,  
By trumpets blazoned, from the sky downblown,  
It grows a vast march, massive, monotonous, known  
Of old gold trumpeteers  
Through infinite years:  
Bursting the white, thronged vaults of the cool sky.

Till hurtling down there falls one mad black hammer-blow:  
Then the chained echoes in their maniac woe  
Are loosed against the silence, to shriek uncannily.

The strings shiver faintly, poet:  
Strike the strings,  
Speed the song:  
Tremulous upward rush of wheeling, whirling wings.



## ARTIFICIAL LIGHT

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Poems*, by Elinor Jenkins

Warm and golden and dear  
In custom and kindness set,  
We builded against our fear  
A place wherein to forget  
Darkness that rings us near.

Here our hearts we deceive  
And will not understand.  
Whether we laugh or grieve  
We dwell in a lamp-lit land--  
A land of make-believe

Not too high for our pride  
Where to we are ever bond  
Nor for our souls too wide--  
And all is night beyond  
Where monstrous things abide.

Still without ceasing we  
Watch on our stronghold keep,  
Lest lamps burn flickeringly,  
And, while we slumber and sleep,  
Outcast eternity

Break in a moment through  
Our soul-built barriers slight,  
Look in on us with blue  
Lustreless eyes, whose light  
Life everlasting slew.

Heavy with endless days,  
With endless wisdom sad,  
Should those eyes behold our days  
And our loves wherein we are glad,  
We might not abide their gaze.

Our sorrows flee fast away  
Like shadows before the morn,  
In the light of eternal day  
Pale all our joys forlorn,  
Elf-gold that will not stay;

Find we, looking again,  
For all our cherished treasures  
And all our labours vain,  
Weariness all our pleasures  
And worthless all our pain.

Our vanities kissed and curled,  
Ere the swift vision is gone,  
Into the void are hurled;  
But we ourselves live on,  
Waifs in a blasted world,

Where light and laughter and love  
Lie dead in the dark together  
And we brood their dust above,  
Knowing not surely whether  
'Tis life at our hearts doth move.

Lost without remedy,  
We sit under pitiless skies  
Mourning the moment we  
Looked with our finite eyes  
Into Infinity!



Gibran

## OUT OF MY DEEPER HEART

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Forerunner*, by Kahlil Gibran

Out of my deeper heart a bird rose and flew skyward.

Higher and higher did it rise, yet larger and larger did it grow.

At first it was but like a swallow, then a lark, then an eagle, then as vast as a spring cloud, and then it filled the starry heavens.

Out of my heart a bird flew skyward. And it waxed larger as it flew. Yet it left not my heart.

\* \* \* \* \*

O my faith, my untamed knowledge, how shall I fly to your height and see with you man's larger self pencilled upon the sky?

How shall I turn this sea within me into mist, and move with you in space immeasurable?

How can a prisoner within the temple behold its golden domes?

How shall the heart of a fruit be stretched to envelop the fruit also?

O my faith, I am in chains behind these bars of silver and ebony, and I cannot fly with you.

Yet out of my heart you rise skyward, and it is my heart that holds you, and I shall be content.



Peabody

## PYRAMUS AND THISBE

By Josephine Preston Peabody

The Project Gutenberg eBook, *The Children's Hour, Volume 3* (of 10), by Various, Edited by Eva March Tappan

Venus did not always befriend true lovers, as she had befriended Hippomenes, with her three golden apples. Sometimes, in the enchanted island of Cyprus, she forgot her worshipers far away, and they called on her in vain.

So it was in the sad story of Hero and Leander, who lived on opposite borders of the Hellespont. Hero dwelt at Sestos, where she served as a priestess, in the very temple of Venus; and Leander's home was in Abydos, a town on the opposite shore. But every night this lover would swim across the water to see Hero, guided by the light which she was wont to set in her tower. Even such loyalty could not conquer fate. There came a great storm, one night, that put out the beacon, and washed Leander's body up with the waves to Hero, and she sprang into the water to rejoin him, and so perished.

Not wholly unlike this was the fate of Halcyone, a queen of Thessaly, who dreamed that her husband Ceyx had been drowned, and on waking hastened to the shore to look for him. There she saw her dream come true,--his lifeless body floating towards her on the tide; and as she flung herself after him, mad with grief, the air upheld her and she seemed to fly. Husband and wife were changed into birds; and there on the very water, at certain seasons, they build a nest that floats unhurt,--a portent of calm

for many days and safe voyage for the ships. So it is that seamen love these birds and look for halcyon weather.

But there once lived in Babylonia two lovers named Pyramus and Thisbe, who were parted by a strange mischance. For they lived in adjoining houses; and although their parents had forbidden them to marry, these two had found a means of talking together through a crevice in the wall.

Here, again and again, Pyramus on his side of the wall and Thisbe on hers, they would meet to tell each other all that had happened during the day, and to complain of their cruel parents. At length they decided that they would endure it no longer, but that they would leave their homes and be married, come what might. They planned to meet, on a certain evening, by a mulberry-tree near the tomb of King Ninus, outside the city gates. Once safely met, they were resolved to brave fortune together.

So far all went well. At the appointed time, Thisbe, heavily veiled, managed to escape from home unnoticed, and after a stealthy journey through the streets of Babylon, she came to the grove of mulberries near the tomb of Ninus. The place was deserted, and once there she put off the veil from her face to see if Pyramus waited anywhere among the shadows. She heard the sound of a footfall and turned to behold--not Pyramus, but a creature unwelcome to any tryst--none other than a lioness crouching to drink from the pool hard by.

Without a cry, Thisbe fled, dropping her veil as she ran. She found a hiding-place among the rocks at some distance, and there she waited, not knowing what else to do.

The lioness, having quenched her thirst (after some ferocious meal), turned from the spring and, coming upon the veil, sniffed at it curiously, tore and tossed it with her reddened jaws,--as she would have done with Thisbe herself,--then dropped the plaything and crept away to the forest once more.

It was but a little after this that Pyramus came hurrying to the meeting-place, breathless with eagerness to find Thisbe and tell her what had delayed him. He found no Thisbe there. For a moment he was confounded. Then he looked about for some signs of her, some footprint by the pool. There was the trail of a wild beast in the grass, and near by a woman's veil, torn and stained with blood; he caught it up and knew it for Thisbe's.

So she had come at the appointed hour, true to her word; she had waited there for him alone and defenseless, and she had fallen a prey to some beast from the jungle! As these thoughts rushed upon the young man's mind, he could endure no more.



"Was it to meet me, Thisbe, that you came to such a death!" cried he. "And I followed all too late. But I will atone. Even now I come lagging, but by no will of mine!"

So saying, the poor youth drew his sword and fell upon it, there at the foot of that mulberry-tree which he had named as the trysting-place, and his life-blood ran about the roots.

During these very moments, Thisbe, hearing no sound and a little reassured, had stolen from her hiding-place and was come to the edge of the grove. She saw that the lioness had left the spring, and, eager to show her lover that she had dared all things to keep faith, she came slowly, little by little, back to the mulberry-tree.

She found Pyramus there, according to his promise. His own sword was in his heart, the empty scabbard by his side, and in his hand he held her veil still clasped. Thisbe saw these things as in a dream, and suddenly the truth awoke her. She saw the piteous mischance of all; and when the dying Pyramus opened his eyes and fixed them upon her, her heart broke. With the same sword she stabbed herself, and the lovers died together.

There the parents found them, after a weary search, and they were buried together in the same tomb. But the berries of the mulberry-tree turned red that day, and red they have remained ever since.



## THE MONEY SHIP

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Legends of Fire Island Beach and the South Side*, by Edward Richard Shaw

Seventy years ago two boys, one seven years old and the other twelve, made a trip with their father up the Great South Bay. They had been promised that when it became necessary to land and mend the nets, they might run across the Beach to the ocean.

So, one afternoon when the nets were spread, away the boys scampered,

dragging their outstretched hands through the tall grass. But coming upon a damp spot of meadow when a third of the way over, they were obliged to turn their course. In doing so, they chanced to look behind them, and seeing how far they were from the boat and how small it appeared, they were afraid, and had half a mind to turn back. But the younger lad caught sight of the large, leafy stalks of a great rose mallow, a few steps ahead, spreading the broad petals of its passionate flower out to the sun and the breeze.

"See them big flowers," he said, to his brother.

Forgetting their fear, both ran to the spot, plucked a handful, and continued their way to the ocean.

"They ain't got any smell," said the older, "but they're a pretty color."

"Let's get a lot when we come back, and take 'em home," suggested the younger.

But the showy flowers, deprived of the abundant moisture which their roots continually send up, soon wilted and lost their fresh, tropical beauty. Surprised and disappointed at this, the lads threw them down and quickened their steps. So anxious were they to get across, that the Beach seemed much wider than they had ever imagined. At last they reached the ridge of hills that lie on the inner side of the surf strand, shutting out all view of the ocean, and toiled to the top. The hills seemed very steep and high to them, for in all their lives they had never been away from the low and level south side of the Island.

Reaching the top, that far and mighty prospect of the great deep burst upon them. It was a sight they had expected to see, but a sight of whose accompanying grandeur they had not formed the least conception. They stood silent, each for the time unconscious of the other, while the feeling which comes in the presence of the sublime surged up within their minds.

Young hearts, though, do not give themselves up long to such emotions, and wear their freshness out with pondering, as older people do. With these boys, the spell was brief; but during it the great sea had breathed its infinite benediction upon them, arousing within them feelings unstirred before. The usual traits of boyhood, however, soon asserted themselves, and the boys ran down the slope and began to gather shells and skim them into the surf. They did not, though, whirl away every shell, but, now and then, thrust a pretty one into their pockets. And with the shells they often saved smooth white stones that had been bathed and polished by the sea.

Tiring of this play, they turned to making marks and figures, and writing their names in the wet sand. Then they threw themselves down and dug holes in the wet sand with “skimmer” shells, and banked the sand up over their feet and hands.

“I wonder where that ship’s going and how far away she is?” said the younger lad.

“Oh, fifty miles—for you can’t see anything but her sails, and only a little of them,” answered the other.

Then the younger asked if that wasn’t the end of the world where the sky went down into the ocean. And watching the low clouds that floated along the distant horizon, he fancied that they were going off to the end of the world.

“May be,” he spoke, “they’re going after rain—clouds have some place where they keep their rain. How slow they’re going! When they get the rain, they’ll hurry back. Why, then they almost fly. Ain’t you seen ’em fly on a stormy day when they’re low down, and you could almost see through ’em? I guess they hurry to scatter the rain over more ground.”

The elder brother paid no heed to these fancies, but began to roll his trousers up above his knees as high as he could pull them. The younger quickly did the same, for there were no shoes and stockings to be removed, as bay-men’s boys, in those days, went barefooted in summer time.

Then they played along the strand, running down as the waves withdrew from the shore, and as one broke again, and reached up rapidly with its liquid hands, they would run from it. At length, a wave stretched its foamy arms farther up, and caught them ankle deep. The charm of playing with the watery being was broken, and now they waded down, standing knee-deep to feel themselves settle as the undertow scurried past them with its freight of sand. At last, a larger wave came unawares, and wet the elder brother’s trousers, changing quickly the current of his thoughts.

“Come,” said he, “father told us not to stay over here long. We must hurry right back.”

They ran westward to a low spot between the hills, and turned through this pass. As they were following the winding around the edge of a hill, suddenly the older brother grasped the younger’s arm, and stopped short before a spot where no grass grew—a slight hollow swept out by the winds.

“See them bones!” he exclaimed. “They’re men’s bones. There’s a hand—and

over there's a skull. See it rock! See it! I'm afraid. Let's run."

Away they ran in their fright, coming out of breath to their father, and telling him with much gasping what they had seen.

"Well," he replied, "before we get underway for home this afternoon, I'll go with you and see what it was. Let me think. This is near the Old House. It's easy enough to account for the bones over there; but the skull's rocking—I guess you imagined that."

"No, sir, father, I saw it go just like this—first one side and then the other," replied the elder son, as he suggested the rocking by the motion of his hands.

"The skull don't rock now," said the father, when they reached the spot in the afternoon. He picked up the skull, and looking in, saw that a meadow mouse had built its nest there.

"Yes, boys, I guess you were right. I've no doubt now it did rock."

And looking again at the skull, he saw that there were double teeth all around on each jaw. A horror ran through him at the thought. He cast the skull away, and turned to leave the spot, taking his boys by the hand. Half-way to the boat he spoke, saying: "That was a pirate's skull and them was pirates' bones. I heard when we first moved up to this part of the Island something about pirates being buried over on the Beach. This must be the place. I never inquired into the partic'lars. I don't like such things, and don't want to know 'bout 'em. If you do, wait till you get older, and then inquire into it. It's bad for you to know such things now."

The incident of coming upon the moving skull made so profound an impression upon the elder lad that his curiosity got the better of him, and in less than two days after reaching home, he had found someone who knew about what actually had taken place where the scattered bones lay, and who, moreover, directed him for fuller information to old Captain Terry. It was several years, though, before the lad really set about further inquiry, there being circumstances which wrought seriously against it. In the first place, Captain Terry lived several miles distant, and had the lad walked up to see him, there was the possibility of his being away from home, or if at home, too busy to answer the questions of an inquisitive boy. A walk of ten miles to Captain Terry's and back would deter most boys of their curiosity. Then, too, the walk demanded no little courage of a boy who must go alone, or at best, with some companion of his own age; and should they be detained, causing a return after dark, there were to be passed one or two places along the road of such repute that a boy underwent an ordeal in his own mind in

passing them, even in broad daylight.

Clam-Hollow, deep, damp, and dismal, the narrow, crooked road, wooded closely by tall and sombre pines, all interwoven with their thick underbrush, was the scene of many a marvelous happening, which neighborhood talk attributed to that locality; while Brewster's brook, near which the slave murdered his oppressive master, exercised a still stronger influence of fear and horror over the mind of every boy who had ever been past it.

But when the youth had grown towards manhood, and had forgotten the foolish fears and apprehensions of boyhood, when he was doing what he could to make his way in life—sometimes a laborer on farms, sometimes a boatman on the Bay—he heard, at casual times and places, so many allusions and fragmentary accounts of the buccaneers whose bodies lay buried westward of the Old House, that he was led to make full inquiry, and to get at the truth as near as might be. Not only was old Captain Terry's recital heard, but all information that threw any light upon the tragedy was gleaned and treasured, and when an old man he related the following:

Very early in the present century, a ship hove to off Montauk, and set ashore a man.

She had, doubtless, made her landfall near the Inlet, had skirted the coast eastward, attracting no attention whatever—unlike in this respect the ship that the two brothers who went on the Beach "horse-footing" that June Sunday saw anchor close in, send her yawl ashore, and bury treasure, spilling human blood upon it in the act.

When the landing was made the ship stood out to sea and made long tacks off and on, gradually working westward along the coast.

The sailor set ashore was a man of tall and powerful frame. He brought apparently nothing ashore with him, and no sooner had he gained the dry strand than he set out at a brisk pace, making his way westward over the narrow and rocky peninsula. When half the distance to Napeague Beach, he stopped near a large rock and made certain observations. This done, he signalled to the ship, and was answered by the clewing up of the foresail. Then he recommenced his walk towards the village of Amagansette. It was dusk when he reached that village, and his first move was to find where he could spend the night. His applications for lodgings were repeatedly refused by the inhabitants, and that evening and for a week thereafter, the most prominent topic of village talk and conjecture was the stranger who had sought lodgings at so many doors.

Where he passed the night is not known. But the next day, at East Hampton and at South Hampton, the question was frequently asked, "Did

you see the stranger that went through the village this morning?"

Perhaps no ordinary event in those days would have attracted more attention at these villages than the appearance and disappearance of an unknown man. Who he was, what his errand might be, where he came from, and whither he went, were matters of speculation for days; and in this instance there was an additional incentive to curiosity, for the stranger's dress showed him to be a sailor, his manner was rough, his face was cruel in expression, and he held no further word of conversation than was barely necessary to supply his wants.

It is said that after leaving these villages the stranger was seen making observations on the coast somewhere below Ketchabonack. Of his journey westward, nothing more is known, until he was passing over that long, sandy, and solitary tract of road which lies between Forge River and The Mills. Here he stopped, and made some inquiry of Mr. Payne, an old soldier of the Revolution.

When the stranger departed, the family at once asked, "Who was he?"

The reply made by old Mr. Payne was significant. "That I can't tell; but one thing I can—whatever he is, he has been in human slaughter."

At one of those villages where the Great South Bay broadens to a width of four or five miles, this man was set across to the Beach. To some of the residents thereabout he was known, and so, moreover, was the fact that, for a long period, he had been away from home—piloting, it was reported. His wife and also his daughter, a young woman of defiant mien, saucy speech, and, it is said, of unwholesome reputation, dwelt alone upon the Beach, at what from early colonial days had been called the Old House, but which, since the tragedy of that awful night, has more frequently borne the name of the iniquitous family.

For two days the ship had been sailing east and west, standing off and on shore, awaiting intelligence from him. He saw her the morning he landed on the Beach, but could not signal, as the man who set him across did not return at once. Then, too, after he had gone, two vessels loaded for New York passed within an hour and a half of each other, on their way to Fire Island. Late in the afternoon—the earliest moment he deemed safe—he signalled to the ship that he had reached the spot where all had agreed to land, that circumstances and surroundings were opportune for their purpose, and to hold in position as best possible till darkness settled.

All, however, was not favorable. There were indications of an approaching storm—indications that portended its sudden approach. The swell on shore, too, was rising and rolling in with stronger volume. They were in a bad position, and well they knew it. There was not

sea-room enough, with a south-easterly storm, in that angle of the coast. But what cared that reckless crew now about their ship, other than she must not go ashore within sight or reach of where they proposed to land.

Night came, and a fire flamed up on the shore, built low down near the tide mark, that the hills might hide all view of it from people upon the main-land. It was the signal when to leave ship and where to come ashore. According to the understanding on ship-board off Montauk, the fire was to be set three rods westward of the best spot of beach to land, within half a mile of the Old House.

There was hurry on ship-board. Time pressed, for the edges of the storm were upon them. Two of the ship's yawls were lowered, made fast alongside, and into these were passed canvas bags, containing coin and, it is supposed, other valuables. Each member of the crew had secured in some manner upon his person his own share of the results of their hazardous and wicked doings. When the yawls were ready, the crew made efforts to scuttle the ship, so that she might sink during the night. But, doubtless owing to the haste imposed by the coming storm, these efforts did not promise success; and fearing that the vessel, when abandoned, would be driven directly ashore, orders were given to take in part of the sail, leaving in trim just spread of canvas enough to keep the ship in the wind. Then, heading her seaward and lashing the helm to windward, the buccaneers embarked in the yawls and pulled towards shore—seventeen men in all, abandoning a life of robbery and murder, but bringing with them the booty such a life had secured.

Nearing the shore, they saw by the fire-light the form of their accomplice. No other man was with him, and yet the forms of two other persons were seen in the circle of light which the fire radiated out into the dark. There was shouting to and fro of how to come on, and oaths and harsh accusations besides—why he had been so long, and why had he signalled them on when a storm was already in the rigging. The surf was threatening, but it was too late now to make any other decision. With strength of oar they held themselves in position, watching the right moment to take the best wave and ride in. But whether directions were misunderstood, or whether in the darkness there was miscalculation, the yawls swamped upon the bar, throwing the seventeen buccaneers into the rushing surf. It was a despairing, mad struggle for life, with piercing cries and blasphemy heard above the booming of the waves. Two buccaneers, Tom Knight and Jack Sloane, gained the shore. Others sank soon, while yet others, quite exhausted, might have been rescued. But treachery, calculating its chance, stepped in and did foul work. Then what horrible exertion went on all that night! What hot search was kept up for lifeless forms as the sea tossed them up! How, when discovered, were they pulled out of the edge of the surf, and clothing rifled! And then, to cover it all, their bodies were dragged to a hollow among the

hills, and there buried. The storm set in before the night was half gone, and a wild day followed, keeping from the Beach any boatman that chance might have led that way.

Tom Knight and Jack Sloane, not a fortnight thereafter, made their appearance upon the main shore, and spent money freely. They came and went, again and again, always spending with the same lavish hand, throwing down, it is said, a Spanish dollar for the most trivial purchase, and invariably refusing any change.

Rumors that some horrid deed had been committed were soon in circulation, and conjectures of what had happened upon the Beach were many and various.

A town magistrate, hearing these, began an inquiry. He sent constables to the Beach with warrants to arrest the family and everyone else in the house. Only the mother and the daughter were found. These were brought to the main-land, and half a day was spent in examination; but the magistrate could find no positive evidence that warranted further action on his part.

On the day the mother and daughter were arrested, those three buccaneers—the pilot, Tom Knight, and Jack Sloane—watched from hiding-places apart in the hills, the coming and going of the constables. When all possibility of detection had passed, they returned to the Old House. Each sought out his treasure whence he had temporarily hid it, in the bushes or in the sand. After hot discussion, each packed his gold according to his own notion, and the three buccaneers struggled through the hills in separate directions to bury their treasure.

Tom Knight's gold was found forty years after, just as he had sealed it up in the black pot which the Captain found, in that last fortunate patrol of the Beach; the gold of the other buccaneers lies somewhere among those sand-hills until this day.

Immediately after the arrest, Tom Knight and Jack Sloane left for other parts, and very shortly the family broke up its residence on the Beach and moved to the Western frontier, where, it is said, ill-fate and disaster followed them.

That portion of the Beach, however, attracted many thither. But little money was then in circulation. The government, it was well known, had coined money but a few years, while Spain was imagined to have stamped untold millions; and the hope of finding Spanish coin quickly sprang up in many a man's mind. In consequence, bay-men often strolled along that part of the coast, though most of them took good heed not to be there after dark. Spanish dollars were frequently found—one person picking up first and last thirty-eight of these. Search was even made upon the bar



where the yawls upset. But periods when the sea was smooth enough to work were rare, and what is more, the exact spot was unknown. Fragments of the canvas bags were found, and a few coins; but nothing commensurate to expectation and the time spent in search.

The ship remained off the coast, and as if guided by an insane pilot, alternately sailed and drifted, veering her course through every point of the compass from northeast to southeast, but working, singularly enough, all the time eastward.

Her strange behavior attracted one day the attention of a party of fishermen on the Beach opposite Smith's Point. Some of them proposed most ardently that the surf-boat be launched and the ship boarded. But others of them were afraid, and stoutly opposed any such adventure. And so a prize of more value than the catch of many seasons passed them, because, let us say it plainly, superstition was stronger than reason.

Near South Hampton the Money Ship went ashore. There were neither papers nor cargo on board which would indicate where she came from. A sea-merchant thought some of the casks that were found in the hold had contained Italian silks. Seven Spanish doubloons were found on a locker in the cabin, and several cutlasses and pistols were scattered about. The whole vessel was searched, but nothing more could be found. Two of those men, though, who had aided in the search went on board at nightfall. Suddenly, while peering about, their light went out, and one man, frightened and deaf to persuasion, fled ashore. The other, undaunted, made anew his light and continued the search. While hunting about the cabin, he bethought to pry away a part of the ceiling. Upon doing so, he found a quantity of money concealed there, and as it dropped down from its place of lodgment, some of the coins rolled out of the cabin-window into the sea. This time it was an honest man's treasure, and he carried ashore that night many a hatful. Just how much was thus secured could never be learned. Some put the amount at two hundred dollars, others, and by far the greater number, thought it many times this sum. One thing is certain—there were marked changes noticeable in the circumstances of that family from that time, and the signs of prosperity were not only sudden but lasting.

Whence came the Money-Ship? There was not even a name or commission to give any clew. Could she have been an English merchantman, which had chanced to be in the West Indies during the insurrection in Hayti, and on board of which some of the French inhabitants of the island had sought refuge, bringing with them their wealth,—that when at sea, mutiny had arisen, the officers and passengers had been made way with, and their wealth appropriated by the sailors?

Was she a Spanish pirate from the Gulf, with half her crew English sailors?

Or was she a galleon sailing from the Spanish main to old Spain?

It has always remained a mystery.



## THE MAGICIAN WITH THE SWINE'S HEAD

Project Gutenberg's *Folk-Lore and Legends: Oriental*, by Charles John Tibbitts

When the Son of the Chan had, as before, seized upon Ssidi, and was carrying him away, Ssidi spoke as formerly, but the Son of the Chan shook his head, without uttering a word, and Ssidi began the following relation:--

"A long while since there lived in a happy country a man and a woman. The man had many bad qualities, and cared for nothing but eating, drinking, and sleeping. At last his wife said unto him, 'By thy mode of life thou hast wasted all thine inheritance. Arise thee, then, from thy bed, and while I am in the fields, go you out and look about you!'

"As he, therefore, according to these words, was looking about him, he saw a multitude of people pass behind the pagoda with their herds; and birds, foxes, and dogs crowding and noising together around a particular spot. Thither he went, and there found a bladder of butter; so he took it home and placed it upon the shelf. When his wife returned and saw the bladder of butter upon the shelf, she asked, 'Where found you this bladder of butter?' To this he replied, 'I did according to your word, and found this.' Then said the woman 'Thou went out but for an instant, and hast already found thus much.'

"Then the man determined to display his abilities, and said, 'Procure me then a horse, some clothes, and a bloodhound.' The wife provided them accordingly; and the man taking with him, besides these, his bow, cap, and mantle, seated himself on horseback, led the hound in a leash, and rode forth at random. After he had crossed over several rivers he espied a fox. 'Ah,' thought he, 'that would serve my wife for a cap.'

"So saying, he pursued the fox, and when it fled into a hamster's

hole, the man got off his horse, placed his bow, arrows, and clothes upon the saddle, fastened the bloodhound to the bridle, and covered the mouth of the hole with his cap. The next thing he did was to take a large stone, and hammer over the hole with it; this frightened the fox, which ran out and fled with the cap upon its head. The hound followed the fox, and drew the horse along with it, so that they both vanished in an instant, and the man was left without any clothes.

"After he had turned back a long way, he reached the country of a mighty Chan, entered the Chan's stable, and concealed himself in a stack of hay, so that merely his eyes were left uncovered. Not long afterwards, the beloved of the Chan was walking out, and wishing to look at a favourite horse, she approached close to the hayrick, placed the talisman of life of the Chan's kingdom upon the ground, left it there, and returned back to the palace without recollecting it. The man saw the wonderful stone, but was too lazy to pick it up. At sunset the cows came by, and the stone was beaten into the ground. Some time afterwards a servant came and cleansed the place, and the wonderful stone was cast aside upon a heap.

"On the following day the people were informed, by the beating of the kettledrums, that the beloved of the Chan had lost the wonderful stone. At the same time, all the magicians and soothsayers and interpreters of signs were summoned, and questioned upon the subject. On hearing this, the man in the hayrick crept out as far as his breast, and when the people thronged around him and asked, 'What hast thou learned?' he replied, 'I am a magician.' On hearing these words they exclaimed, 'Because the wondrous stone of the Chan is missing, all the magicians in the country are summoned to appear before him. Do you then draw nigh unto the Chan.' The man said, 'I have no clothes.' Hereupon the whole crowd hastened to the Chan, and announced unto him thus: 'In the hayrick there lieth a magician who has no clothes. This magician would draw nigh unto you, but he has nought to appear in.' The Chan said, 'Send unto him this robe of cloth, and let him approach.' It was done.

"The man was fetched, and after he had bowed down to the Chan, he was asked what he needed for the performance of his magic charms. To this question he replied, 'For the performance of my magic charms, it is needful that I should have the head of a swine, some cloths of five colours, and some baling' (a sacred figure of dough or paste). When all these things were prepared, the magician deposited the swine's head at the foot of a tree, dressed it with the cloths of five colours, fastened on the large baling, and passed the whole of three nights in meditation. On the day appointed, all the people assembled, and the magician having put on a great durga (cloak), placed himself, with the swine's head in his hand, in the street. When they were all assembled together, the magician, showing the swine's head, said,

'Here not and there not.' All were gladdened at hearing these words. 'Because, therefore,' said the magician, 'the wonderful stone is not to be found among the people, we must seek for it elsewhere.'

"With these words the magician, still holding the swine's head in his hand, drew nigh unto the palace, and the Chan and his attendants followed him, singing songs of rejoicing. When, at last, the magician arrived at the heap, he stood suddenly still, and exclaimed, 'There lies the wonderful stone.' Then, first removing some of the earth, he drew forth the stone, and cleansed it. 'Thou art a mighty magician,' joyfully exclaimed all who beheld it. 'Thou art the master of magic with the swine's head. Lift up thyself that thou mayest receive thy reward.' The Chan said, 'Thy reward shall be whatsoever thou wilt.' The magician, who thought only of the property he had lost, said, 'Give unto me a horse, with saddle and bridle, a bow and arrows, a cap, a mantle, a hound, and a fox. Such things give unto me.' At these words the Chan exclaimed, 'Give him all that he desireth.' This was done, and the magician returned home with all that he desired, and with two elephants, one carrying meat, and the other butter.

"His wife met him close to his dwelling, with brandy for him to drink, and said, 'Now, indeed, thou art become a mighty man.' Thereupon they went into the house, and when they had laid themselves down to sleep, the wife said to him, 'Where hast thou found so much flesh and so much butter?' Then her husband related to her circumstantially the whole affair, and she answered him saying, 'Verily, thou art a stupid ass. To-morrow I will go with a letter to the Chan.'

"The wife accordingly wrote a letter, and in the letter were the following words:--'Because it was known unto me that the lost wondrous stone retained some evil influence over the Chan, I have, for the obviating of that influence, desired of him the dog and the fox. What I may receive for my reward depends upon the pleasure of the Chan.'

"The Chan read the letter through, and sent costly presents to the magician. And the magician lived pleasantly and happily.

"Now in a neighbouring country there dwelt seven Chans, brethren. Once upon a time they betook themselves, for pastime, to an extensive forest, and there they discovered a beauteous maiden with a buffalo, and they asked, 'What are you two doing here? Whence come you?' The maiden answered, 'I come from an eastern country, and am the daughter of a Chan. This buffalo accompanies me.' At these words these others replied, 'We are the seven brethren of a Chan, and have no wife. Wilt thou be our wife?'[1] The maiden answered, 'So be it.' But the maiden and the buffalo were two Mangusch (a species of evil spirit like the Schumnu), and were seeking out men whom they might devour. The male

Mangusch was a buffalo, and the female, she who became wife to the brethren.

[1] It is in accordance with the customs of Thibet for a woman of that country to have several husbands.

"After the Mangusch had slain, yearly, one of the brethren of the Chan, there was only one remaining. And because he was suffering from a grievous sickness, the ministers consulted together and said, 'For the sickness of the other Chans we have tried all means of cure, and yet have found no help, neither do we in this case know what to advise. But the magician with the swine's head dwells only two mountains off from us, and he is held in great estimation; let us, without further delay, send for him to our assistance.'

"Upon this four mounted messengers were despatched for the magician, and when they arrived at his dwelling, they made known to him the object of their mission. 'I will,' said the magician, 'consider of this matter in the course of the night, and will tell you in the morning what is to be done.'

"During the night he related to his wife what was required of him, and his wife said, 'You are looked upon, up to this time, as a magician of extraordinary skill; but from this time there is an end to your reputation. However, it cannot be helped, so go you must.'

"On the following morning the magician said to the messengers, 'During the night-time I have pondered upon this matter, and a good omen has presented itself to me in a dream. Let me not tarry any longer but ride forth to-day.' The magician, thereupon, equipped himself in a large cloak, bound his hair together on the crown of his head, carried in his left hand the rosary, and in his right the swine's head, enveloped in the cloths of five colours.

"When in this guise he presented himself before the dwelling-place of the Chan, the two Mangusch were sorely frightened, and thought to themselves, 'This man has quite the appearance, quite the countenance, of a man of learning.' Then the magician, first placing a baling on the pillow of the bed, lifted up the swine's head, and muttered certain magic words.

"The wife of the Chan seeing this discontinued tormenting the soul of the Chan, and fled in all haste out of the room. The Chan, by this conduct being freed from the pains of sickness, sank into a sound sleep. 'What is this?' exclaimed the magician, filled with affright. 'The disease has grown worse, the sick man uttereth not a sound; the sick man hath departed.' Thus thinking, he cried, 'Chan, Chan!' But because the Chan uttered no sound, the magician seized the swine's

head, vanished through the door, and entered the treasure-chamber. No sooner had he done so, than 'Thief, thief!' sounded in his ears, and the magician fled into the kitchen; but the cry of 'Stop that thief! stop that thief!' still followed him. Thus pursued the magician thought to himself, 'This night it is of no use to think of getting away, so I will, therefore, conceal myself in a corner of the stable.' Thus thinking, he opened the door, and there found a buffalo, that lay there as if wearied with a long journey. The magician took the swine's head, and struck the buffalo three times between the horns, whereupon the buffalo sprang up and fled like the wind.

"But the magician followed after the buffalo, and when he approached the spot where he was, he heard the male Mangusch say to his female companion, 'Yonder magician knew that I was in the stable; with his frightful swine's head he struck me three blows--so that it was time for me to escape from him.' And the Chan's wife replied, 'I too am so afraid, because of his great knowledge, that I would not willingly return; for, of a certainty, things will go badly with us. To-morrow he will gather together the men with weapons and arms, and will say unto the women, "Bring hither firing;" when this is done he will say, "Lead the buffalo hither." And when thou appearest, he will say unto thee, "Put off the form thou hast assumed." And because all resistance would be useless, the people perceiving thy true shape will fall upon thee with swords, and spears, and stones; and when they have put thee to death, they will consume thee with fire. At last the magician will cause me to be dragged forth and consumed with fire. Oh, but I am sore afraid!'

"When the magician heard these words, he said to himself, 'After this fashion may the thing be easily accomplished.' Upon this he betook himself, with the swine's head to the Chan, lifted up the baling, murmured his words of magic, and asked, 'How is it now with the sickness of the Chan?' And the Chan replied, 'Upon the arrival of the master of magic the sickness passed away, and I have slept soundly.' Then the magician spake as follows: 'To-morrow, then, give this command to thy ministers, that they collect the whole of the people together, and that the women be desired to bring firing with them.'

"When, in obedience to these directions, there were two lofty piles of fagots gathered together, the magician said, 'Place my saddle upon the buffalo.' Then the magician rode upon the saddled buffalo three times around the assembled people, then removed the saddle from the buffalo, smote it three times with the swine's head, and said, 'Put off the form thou hast assumed.'

"At these words the buffalo was transformed into a fearful ugly Mangusch. His eyes were bloodshot, his upper tusks descended to his breast, his bottom tusks reached up to his eyelashes, so that he was

fearful to behold. When the people had hewed this Mangusch to pieces with sword and with arrow, with spear and with stone, and his body was consumed upon one of the piles of fagots, then said the magician, 'Bring forth the wife of the Chan.' And with loud cries did the wife of the Chan come forth, and the magician smote her with the swine's head, and said, 'Appear in thine own form!' Immediately her long tusks and bloodshot eyes exhibited the terrific figure of a female Mangusch.

"After the wife of the Chan had been cut in pieces, and consumed by fire, the magician mounted his horse; but the people bowed themselves before him, and strewed grain over him, presented him with gifts, and regaled him so on every side, that he was only enabled to reach the palace of the Chan on the following morning. Then spake the Chan, full of joy, to the magician, 'How can I reward you for the great deed that thou hast done?' And the magician answered, 'In our country there are but few nose-sticks for oxen to be found. Give me, I pray you, some of these nose-sticks.' Thus spake he, and the Chan had him conducted home with three sacks of nose-sticks, and seven elephants bearing meat and butter.

"Near unto his dwelling his wife came with brandy to meet him; and when she beheld the elephants, she exclaimed, 'Now, indeed, thou art become a mighty man.' Then they betook themselves to their house, and at night-time the wife of the magician asked him, 'How camest thou to be presented with such gifts?' The magician replied, 'I have cured the sickness of the Chan, and consumed with fire two Mangusch.' At these words she replied, 'Verily, thou hast behaved very foolishly. After such a beneficial act, to desire nothing but nose-sticks for cattle! To-morrow I myself will go to the Chan.'

"On the morrow the wife drew near unto the Chan, and presented unto him a letter from the magician, and in this letter stood the following words:--'Because the magician was aware that of the great evil of the Chan a lesser evil still remained behind, he desired of him the nose-sticks. What he is to receive as a reward depends upon the pleasure of the Chan.'

""He is right,' replied the Chan, and he summoned the magician, with his father and mother, and all his relations before him, and received them with every demonstration of honour. 'But for you I should have died; the kingdom would have been annihilated; the ministers and all the people consumed as the food of the Mangusch. I, therefore, will honour thee,' and he bestowed upon him proofs of his favour."

"Both man and wife were intelligent," exclaimed the Son of the Chan.

"Ruler of Destiny," replied Ssidi, "thou hast spoken words! Ssarwala missdood jakzang!" Thus spake he, and burst from the sack through the

air.

Ssidi's fourth relation treats of the Magician with the head of the Swine.



## BROTHERS A SARDONIC COMEDY

By Lewis Beach

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### CHARACTERS

SETH.

LON.

PA.

BROTHERS was first presented by the Provincetown Players, New York.

Applications for permission to produce BROTHERS should be addressed to Frank Shay, Four Christopher Street, New York City. No performance may take place without his consent.

BROTHERS

A SARDONIC COMEDY BY LEWIS BEACH



[SCENE: \_A very small room in a tar-papered shanty, reeking poverty. The entrance is center-back,--a few boards nailed together for a door. A similar door, opening into the bedroom of the shack, upstage right. Downstage left, a broken window. Left center, a rusty cooking stove. Above it, a series of shelves holding a few dishes and cooking utensils. Rough board table in the center of the room. A kitchen chair at the right of the table. A large wooden rocker near the stove; rope and wire hold it together. An arm-chair, below the bedroom door is full of newspapers. Several heterogeneous colored prints culled from out-of-date newspapers and calendars are tacked on the rain-stained walls. When the entrance door is open we see a cleared, sandy spot with a background of scrub oaks and jack pines.\_

\_The curtain rises on the late afternoon of a spring day.\_

\_A man of forty enters, leaving the bedroom door open behind him. His small head and childish face, on a tall, thin, and extremely erect body, resemble those of a species of putty-like rubber doll whose head may be reshaped by the hand. He wears a winter cap, blue flannel shirt, well-worn trousers with suspenders, and sneakers that were once white. Outside shirt sleeves are rolled to the elbow; undershirt sleeves are not. His shoes make no noise; nevertheless, he comes on tiptoe, his eyes fixed on the shelves. For a moment he stops and glances into the room he has just quitted. Satisfied, he squats before the shelves. He hesitates, then quickly lifts from a lower shelf an inverted cooking vessel, and grasps a small tin box which was hidden under it. He inspects the box, trying to decide whether he can pry open its lock.\_]

[\_The voice of an old, infirm man in the adjoining room\_]: Seth?

SETH [\_alarmed; starts to return the box to the shelf\_]. Yes, Pa? [\_His voice is pitched high.\_]

PA [\_querulously\_]. What yuh doin'?

SETH. Jest settin'.

PA. Don't yuh go near my tin box 'til I'm dead.

[\_Seth makes no answer.\_]

PA. D'yuh hear?

SETH. I hear.

PA. I won't heve no one know nothin' 'bout my last will an' testament 'til I'm dead.

[\_There is a pause. Seth is regarding the box intently.\_]

PA. Seth?

SETH [\_peevishly\_]. What d'yuh want?

PA. Bring me a drink.

SETH. There ain't no more water in the pail.

PA. There's lots in the well this spring.

[\_A pause. Seth continues his scrutiny of the lock.\_]

PA. My throat's burnin' up.

SETH. Well, maybe I kin find a drop. [\_Puts the box on the shelf and re-covers it; in doing so makes a slight noise.\_]

PA. What's that noise?

SETH. I'm gettin' yuh a drink!

[\_Seth strolls to the stove, lifts the top from the kettle, and looks inside. He finds a tin cup and fills it with water. Looking into the kettle again, he sees there is little water left. Why make a trip to the pump necessary? Back into the kettle goes some of the water. Cup in hand, he moves toward the bedroom. He reaches the door when a sagging bellied man enters from the yard. It is Lon, the elder, shorter brother. His face has become molded into an expressionless stare, and his every movement seems to be made with an effort. An abused man, Lon, the most ill-treated fellow in the world. At least, so he is ever at pains to have all understand. He wears an old felt hat, cotton shirt, badly patched trousers, suspenders attached to the buttons of his trousers with string, and shoes that are almost soleless. His shirt, stained with sweat, is opened at the throat, revealing red flannel underwear. When Seth sees Lon he immediately closes the bedroom door, silently turns the key in the lock, and puts the key in his pocket. For a moment the men stand looking at each other, reminding one of two roosters. Then Seth strolls to the stove, pours the water into the kettle, and plunks himself down in the rocker. Lon glances once or twice at the bedroom door, but moves

not to it. He watches Seth suspiciously. Finally he speaks.\_]

LON [\_in an expressionless drawl\_]. I hear Pa's dyin'.

SETH. Yuh hear right.

LON [\_with a motion of his head toward the bedroom\_]. Is he in there?

SETH. Yes.

[\_Lon hesitates, then moves slowly toward Pa's room. An idea strikes Seth suddenly and he interrupts Lon's progress.\_]

SETH. He's asleep.

[\_Lon stops. Seth fills his pipe and lights it. Lon takes his corncob from his pocket and coughs meaningly. Seth looks at Lon, sees what he wants, but does not offer him tobacco. Lon puts his pipe back in his pocket, moves to the table, sits, and sighs. He crosses his right foot so Seth sees what was once the sole of his shoe.\_]

SETH. What did yuh come here fur?

LON. 'Cause Pa's dyin'.

SETH. Yuh never come when he was about.

LON. Wall, no one ever seed yuh a settin' here much.

SETH [\_fleeringly\_]. Suppose yuh want t' know what he's left yuh.

LON. Wall, ... it warn't comfortable comin' three miles an' a quarter on a day like this un.

SETH [\_cackles\_]. Sand's hot on yer bare naked feet, ain't it?

LON [\_moves his feet\_]. Yuh kin talk about my holey boots. If I didn't heve no mouths but my own t' feed I guess I could buy new ones too. So there, Seth Polland!

SETH. Jacobs offered yuh a job at the fisheries same as me.

LON. It's too fur t' hoof it twict a day.

SETH. Yuh could sleep at the fisheries.

LON. I got t' look after my kids.

SETH [\_grins\_]. 'Tain't my fault yuh've kids.

LON [\_threateningly\_]. Don't yuh talk 'bout that! [\_Pause.\_] Yer woman had t' leave yuh. [\_Laughs.\_] Yuh didn't give her 'nough t' eat.

SETH [\_indifferently\_]. She warn't no good.

LON. She had t' leave yuh same as Ma left Pa twenty years ago. Pa's dyin' fur sure?

SETH. Who told yuh?

LON. Ma.

SETH [\_greatly surprised\_]. Ma? [\_suspiciously.\_] What you got t' do with her?

LON. I was passin' her place this mornin'. Furst time I spoke t' her in a year.

SETH. I ain't in two.

LON [\_in despair\_]. Seth, she's cut twenty cords o' wood t' sell.

SETH [\_shaking his head\_]. An' me without a roof o' my own.

LON. Me an' the kids wonder sometimes where our next meal's comin' from.

SETH [\_as though there were something better in store for him\_]. Oh, wall.

LON [\_pricks up his ears; coughs\_]. If I had this house I could work at the fisheries.

SETH. But yuh ain't a goin' t' git it.

LON [\_alarmed\_]. Pa ain't gone an' left it t' yuh?

SETH. Pa deeded this t' Doc last winter.

LON [\_amazed and angered\_]. He did?

SETH. Doc said he could live here 'till he died. But it's Doc's.

LON. It warn't right.

SETH. Wall, he had t' pay fur his physics some way. He told me yuh

wouldn't help him out.

LON. And Pa told me yuh wouldn't. An' yuh ain't got two kids t' feed.  
[\_Pause.\_] There's Pa's old shanty down the road. If I had that I could work at the fisheries.

[\_Seth's smile is his only response.\_]

Pa still owns it, don't he?

SETH. There warn't no call fur him t' make his last will an' testament if he don't.

LON [\_brightens\_]. He's left his last will an' testament?

SETH. Yes. I'm figgerin' on sellin' the place t' Doc.

LON [\_emphatically\_]. Pa ain't a left it t' yuh!

SETH. Doc'll want it.

LON [\_forcefully\_]. Where's the will an' testament?

SETH [\_with a gesture\_]. In the tin box under that there kittle.

[\_Lon hurries to the shelves, picks up the dish, and grasps the box.\_]

LON [\_disappointed\_]. It's locked.

SETH. An' the key's round Pa's neck.

LON. Let's git it.

SETH. Pa won't give it t' us.

LON. Yuh said he was sleepin'.

SETH. I mean--he might wake up.

[\_Lon inspects the box further.\_]

LON. I think I could open it.

SETH. Pa might ask t' see it.

LON. Hell. [\_Puts the box back on the shelf.\_]

SETH. Doc'll want the place seein' as how it's right next t' this un.

[\_Lon is very nervous.\_]

Yuh might jest as wall go home.

LON. No, yuh don't! Yuh can't make me believe Pa's left it t' yuh.

[\_Takes off his hat and mops his brow with his sleeve. The top of his head is very bald.\_]

SETH. Then what yuh gettin' so excited 'bout?

LON. I ain't excited. [\_Puts his hat on.\_] It jest makes me mad 'cause yuh say Pa's left it t' yuh, an' I know he ain't. See? There warn't no call fur him t' heve willed an' testamented it t' yuh. Yuh've only yerself t' look after an' I've two motherless kids.

SETH. Every one knows how much Pa thought o' them.

LON. It warn't my fault if they thumbed their noses at him.

SETH. Yuh could o' basted 'em.

LON. They's like their Ma. Bastin' never done her no good, God rest her soul. All the same, Pa knowd how hard it is fur me t' keep their bellies full. Why, when we heve bread Alexander never wants less than half the loaf! An' all the work I gits t' do is what the city folks who come t' the Beach in the summer gives me.

SETH. Huh! Jest as though I didn't know 'bout yuh. Mr. Breckenridge told me yuh wouldn't even contract t' chop his wood fur him. An' there yuh sits all winter long in that God-fursaken shanty o' yourn, with trees all round yuh, an' yuh won't put an ax t' one 'til yer own fires dies out.

LON. My back ain't never been strong. Choppin' puts the kinks in it. Yuh kin talk, yuh kin, Seth Polland, with a soft job at the fisheries an' three squares a day which yuh don't heve t' cook yourself. Nothin' t' do all winter but walk round them cottages an' see that no one broke in. An' I'm the one who knows how often yuh walk round them cottages. I wish I hed yer snap. [\_Sits.\_] But I ain't never had no luck.

SETH [\_defending himself\_]. I walk round them cottages jest as often as I need t' walk round them cottages.

LON. Huh! I could tell a tale. Who was it set with his feet in the oven last winter, an' let Jack Tompkins break into them cottages--\_with keys\_? [\_Seth does not answer.\_] I could tell, I could. But I ain't a

goin' t' 'til they put me on the witness-stand. [\_Pause.\_] But the furst initials o' his name is Seth Polland.

SETH [\_rising instantly\_]. Lon Polland, yuh ever tell an' I'll skin yuh alive.

LON. Huh!

SETH. Skin yuh like a pole-cat.

LON. Huh!

[\_Seth turns, knocks the ashes from his pipe into the stove. Lon rises; takes Seth's chair and rocks vigorously.\_]

SETH. Yuh know what I got on yuh.

[\_Lon's bravado is short-lived. He rocks less strenuously.\_]

SETH. Yuh thought I didn't see yuh, but I was right on the spot when yuh set fire t' Mr. Rogers' bath-house.

[\_Lon stops rocking.\_]

SETH. Right behind a jack pine I was an' seed yuh do it. An' yuh done it 'cause Mr. Rogers leaved Jessup paint the house when yuh thought yuh ought t' had the job.

LON [\_rises\_]. I got t' be a gettin' home a fore dark an' tend t' my stock.

SETH. Stock? [\_Cackles. Pulls out his tobacco-pouch and fills his pipe. Lon shows his pipe again.\_] A blind mare an' a rooster. [\_Drops pouch on the table as he lights his pipe.\_]

LON. Rooster's dead. [\_Moves stealthily toward the table.\_]

SETH. What of?

LON. Pip.

SETH. Starvation.

LON. I would a killed him this long time, but Victoria howled so when I threatened. The fowl used t' wake me in winter same as summer with his crowin'.

[\_As Lon finishes his speech he reaches for the pouch. But Seth's

hand is quicker. Seth moves to the rocker and sits, dangling the pouch temptingly by one finger. Lon puts his pipe in his pocket.\_]

SETH. Should think yuh'd want t' set round 'til Pa dies, bein' as yer so sure he's left yuh his property.

LON. He oughter a left it t' me.

SETH. Well, I'm a tellin' yuh it's mine.

LON. Yuh ain't got no right t' it. [\_Mops his head again.\_] Pa begged yuh t' come an' live with him, offered yuh this fine roof over yer head, an' yuh was too cussed even t' do that fur him. An' now yuh expect he's made yuh his heir.

SETH. I've treated him righter 'an yuh.

LON. Yuh ain't.

[\_Suddenly something seems to snap in Seth's brain. He looks as though he were in intense pain.\_]

SETH [\_gasping\_]. Maybe he's left it t' the two o' us!

LON. \_What?\_

SETH. Maybe he's divided the place a 'tween us.

LON [\_shakes his head\_]. Oh, he wouldn't be so unhuman as that.

SETH. He would. He was always settin' one agin' t' other.

LON. He used t' tell me I had t' figger how t' git the best o' yuh or he'd baste me.

SETH. He was all the time whettin' us on when we was kids.

LON. It was him showed me how t' shake my old clock so it'd run fur five minutes, an' then you'd swop that pail yuh found fur it.

SETH. Huh! He give me his gum t' stop up the hole in that pail. Yuh wouldn't know it leaked an' we could laugh at yuh when you had t' carry water in it.

LON [\_pathetically\_]. There warn't never more 'an a pint left when I got t' the house. An' Pa always hed such a thirst.

SETH. He'd like t' laugh at us in his grave.



LON. It jest tickled him t' raise hell a 'tween us.

SETH [\_rises\_]. I'll take my oath he's divided the old shanty an' the two acres a 'tween us. [\_Drops into his chair like a condemned man.\_]  
An' I figgered I'd be sellin' them t' Doc t'morrow.

LON. Me an' the kids was a goin' t' heve a garden on the cleared spot.

SETH. A garden in that sand?

LON. Radishes an' rutabagas.

SETH [\_persuasively; his manner becomes kind\_]. Lon, what yuh need is the shanty.

LON [\_droning\_]. The shanty ain't no good t' me without I hes the ground fur it t' set on.

SETH. Yuh can tear it down an' use the lumber t' mend yer old leaky one.

LON. I want the shanty t' live in so I kin git a soft job at the fisheries. [\_Sympathetically.\_] You ought t' have a shanty, Seth. Supposin' yuh was t' take sick. They wouldn't keep yuh at the fisheries then. Yuh take my place an' give me Pa's.

SETH [\_flashing into anger\_]. I want the two acres t' sell Doc. Yer old place leaks like a net! [\_Then, fearing he has been too disparaging:\_]  
But yuh could make it real comfortable with the lumber in--

LON [\_cutting in\_]. I'll make a bargain. I'll leave yuh a bed-stead an' a table if yuh'll take my place.

SETH. I don't want it! I want Pa's old place.

LON. An' I want it. I'm older 'an yuh.

SETH. I got the best claim t' it.

LON. Yuh ain't. We with three mouths t' feed. Yer a swindler, yuh are. Yuh always tried t' cheat me.

SETH. No one kin say that t' me. I'm an honest man. But I'm a goin' 't heve the two acres if I heve t' go t' law.

LON. Wall, yuh ain't a goin' t' wreck me.

SETH [\_calmly; philosophically again\_]. Maybe yer right, Lon, when yuh

say I ought t' have a roof. I'll tell yuh what I'll do, seein' as how yer my brother. Yuh give me the ground an' the house on it, an' I'll make yuh a present o' twenty-five dollars.

LON. That's a lie! Yuh ain't got twenty-five dollars t' yer name.

SETH. Yuh think so.

LON. Every one in these parts knows yuh owes Hawkins forty-three dollars an twenty-nine cents he kin't collect. Give me the house an' ground, an' I'll give yuh my own house an' my note fur twenty-five dollars.

SETH. Yer note! I'm a goin' t' heve Pa's old place.

LON. An' I say that yuh or no swindler like yuh is a goin' t' cheat me out o' it.

SETH. I ain't a swindler, yuh wall-eyed son--

LON [\_advancing\_]. Take it back. Don't yuh call me dissipated names.

SETH. I'll never take it back!

[\_Lon doubles his fists and strikes; but the blow lands in the air as Seth grabs Lon. They fight furiously and in dead earnest, though there is no ethics to the struggle. The rickety furniture trembles as they advance and retreat. Seth is quicker and lighter and less easily winded; but Lon's bulk is not readily moved, and, despite his "weak back," he can still wield his arms. It looks like a fight to the finish. Isn't their future at stake? And they are giving vent to a hatred bred by their father. But suddenly Pa's voice is heard, calling wildly to Seth. The men do not move: the voice seems to have paralyzed their muscles. For a moment they stand dazed. Then consciousness comes to them: they realize that the waiting is over. They tear to the bedroom. A silence follows. They must be fascinated by the ghost of the old man.\_]

SETH [\_in the bedroom; quietly\_]. He's gone, Lon.

LON [\_in the bedroom\_]. Yer right, Seth.

[\_Then their voices rise in dispute.\_]

Don't yuh take it!

SETH. I've got it!

LON. It's mine!

SETH. It ain't!

LON. Yuh kin't--

SETH. Shut up!

[\_They rush into the kitchen, Seth in advance, Lon close on his heels. The younger throws the cooking-dish to the floor, grabs the box, and hurries to the table. As though they were about to discover a world's secret, they unlock the box, each as near to it as possible, his arms tense, fingers itching, ready to ward off a blow or seize the treasure. From the box, Seth takes an old tobacco-pouch, a jack-knife, a bit of heavy cord, a couple of letters. These are contemptuously thrown on the table. The will lies at the bottom of the box. Lon snatches it. Seth would take it from him.\_]

LON. Hold off! I'm jest a goin' t' read it.

[\_Seth curbs his impatience. Lon opens the document and reads, slowly and haltingly.\_]

"I, Nathaniel Polland, o' Sandy Point in the County o' Rhodes an' State o' Michigan, bein' o' sound mind an' memory, do make, publish, an' declare this t' be my last Will an' Testament in manner followin', viz--." What does "viz" mean?

[\_Unable to bear the suspense longer, Seth seizes the paper. He scans it until his eyes catch the all-important paragraph.\_]

SETH. "--Bequeath all my earthly possessions to my wife, Jennie Polland."

[\_Their thunderbolt has descended. They stand like two men suddenly deprived of thought and motion. Medusa's victims could not have been more pitiable. They have been hurled from their El Dorado, which, at the worst, was to have been their common property.\_]

[\_Then Seth's voice comes to him, and sufficient strength to drop into a chair.\_]

SETH. The damned old critter.

LON. I'll be swaned.

SETH [\_blazing out\_]. That's gratitude.

LON. After all we done fur him.

SETH [\_pathetically\_]. An' me a plannin' these last five years on gettin' that house an' ground.

LON. My kids are packin' our furniture this afternoon, gettin' ready t' move in.

SETH [\_with supreme disgust\_]. Leavin' it t' Ma.

LON. Her who he ain't hardly spoke t' in twenty years.

SETH. Jest as though yuh an' me wasn't alive.

LON. We'd a given him our last pipeful.

SETH. His own flesh an' blood.

LON. Why, he told me more 'an a thousand times he hated Ma.

SETH. She don't need it.

LON. She's ready fur the grave-yard.

SETH. She's that stingy, cuttin' an' choppin' wood, sellin it t' the city folks. We might a knowd.

LON. An' me a comin' all the three miles an' a quarter t' see him a fore he died.

SETH. I been settin' here two days a waitin'.

LON. An' then t' treat us like that. [\_Wipes his mouth.\_] Why, the hull place ain't worth a damn!

SETH. A cavin'-in shanty an' two acres yuh couldn't grow weeds on.

LON. A pile o' sand.

SETH [\_rising; bursting into fire like an apparently dead rocket\_]. She ain't a goin' t' heve it!

LON. What?

SETH. I won't let Ma heve it!

LON. But how yuh goin' t' stop her? 'Twon't do no good t' tear up the

will an' testament. It's rec-ord-ed.

SETH. Don't make no difference. She ain't a goin' t' heve that place.

LON [\_eagerly\_]. But how yuh goin'--?

SETH. I don't know. But I'm a goin' t'.

LON. It ain't hers by rights.

SETH. Didn't she leave him twenty years ago?

LON. Why, she ain't even expectin' it!

SETH. She'll never miss it if she don't git it.

LON [\_shaking his head\_]. Me an' the kids packed up, ready t' move in.

[\_There is a silence. Lon deep in his disappointment, Seth making his brain work as it has never worked before. And he is rewarded for his diligence. A suggestion of his sneering smile comes to his face.\_]

SETH. Lon?

LON. Yes?

SETH [\_looks about, making sure that only his brother is listening\_].  
Yuh 'member what yuh done t' Rogers when he didn't leave yuh paint his bath-house?

LON [\_his eyes open wide\_]. Burn it?

SETH. Sh!

LON. Oh, no!

SETH. Yuh don't want Ma t' heve it, does yuh?

LON. When I burned that bath-house I didn't sleep good fur a couple o' nights. I dreamed o' the sheriff.

SETH. Nobody knows but me. An' nobody'll know yuh an' me set fire t' Pa's old place.

LON. Yuh swear yuh won't never tell?

SETH [\_raising his right hand\_]. I swear.

LON. Yuh won't never try an' make out I done it next time we run agin each other fur district school-inspector?

SETH [\_raising his right hand\_]. I swear. 'Cause if I kin't have Pa's old place, no one kin.

LON. Got matches?

SETH. Yes. An' Pa's kerosene-can's got 'bout a pint in it. [\_Takes the can from the bottom shelf.\_]

LON. I may as wall take these papers along with me. [\_Picks up the newspapers.\_]

[\_Seth moves to the table. Begins to fill his pipe. Lon takes his corncob from his pocket and coughs. Seth looks at Lon, meditates, then speaks.\_]

SETH. Heve a smoke, Lon?

LON. Maybe I will.

[\_Lon fills his pipe.--Seth strikes a match, lights his own pipe first, then hands the match to Lon.\_]

SETH. We're brothers.

LON. The same flesh an' blood has got t' treat each other right.

[\_Lon starts to put Seth's tobacco-pouch in his pocket, but Seth stops him.\_]

SETH. An' we wouldn't be treatin' each other right if we let Pa's property come into Ma's hands.

[\_Seth carries the kerosene, Lon the papers. They go out the back door and disappear. Thus, in disgust and rage, the brothers are united. Then Seth's voice is heard.\_]

SETH [\_in the yard\_]. Wait a minute, Lon.

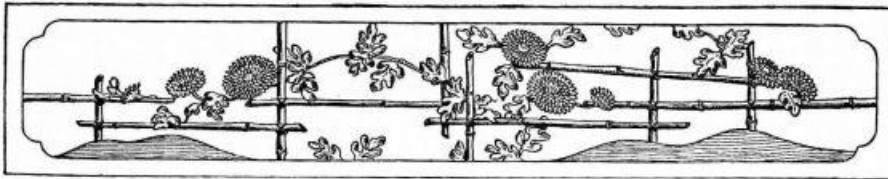
[\_Seth returns. He picks up Pa's tobacco-pouch, knife and scissors, glances toward the door to see that Lon isn't watching, and sticks them into his pocket.\_]

LON [\_in the yard\_]. What yuh doin', Seth? [\_Appears at the door.\_]

SETH. I thought I left somethin' valuable. But I ain't. [\_He leaves.\_]

[\_Lon and Seth pass out of sight.\_]

[\_Curtain.\_]



## SOME FESTIVALS AND A FUNERAL

Project Gutenberg's *An English Girl in Japan*, by Ella M. Hart Bennett

*The Imperial Silver Wedding--Parade of the troops--The wedding feast--The Chinese ball in Tokio--A gay assembly--A Royal funeral--Strange customs.*

It seems curious at first to think of an Emperor with six wives having a silver wedding, but, as I have previously mentioned, His Majesty has but one wife who is recognised officially--the present Empress of Japan. My father and I were staying at Tokio at the time of this ceremony, and were fortunate in receiving invitations, as, out of the three thousand guests invited to the palace, only about a hundred were foreigners.

The event caused great excitement in the capital, for the Japanese are most loyal and devoted subjects. Every street was decorated with flags and garlands of flowers, whilst on the auspicious day, March the 9th, everyone donned their best attire and there was a public holiday all over Japan. Thousands of peasants came from the country on the chance of getting a glimpse at the 'Ruler of the Rising Sun,' who was to review his troops on the parade-ground just outside the walls of the city. The cherry and peach trees were also *\_en fête\_* for the occasion, their pink and white blossoms adding much to the charm of the scene, whilst the wind scattered their petals on the passers-by, covering the ground like newly-fallen snow. By two o'clock over ten thousand troops had assembled, as smart and well-turned-out a set of men as one could wish to see. The cavalry left something to be desired, as the horses were small and mostly in poor condition, but they are strong, willing little beasts, and very serviceable for rough-riding.

Three large tents had been erected on the parade-ground, one for the Royal party, another for the staff and Ministers of State, and the third for the Corps Diplomatique and a few favoured foreigners.

At mid-day a loud fanfare of trumpets was heard, the massed bands struck up the Japanese National Anthem and the Royal procession arrived in sight. The Emperor and Empress were in a golden coach drawn by six horses, followed by eight other carriages containing Royalties and officials. As usual, on their arrival there was dead silence, and their Majesties' expressions were perfectly impassive, as if carved in stone; in fact, during the whole afternoon and the march-past of the troops, I never saw a smile or the slightest sign of interest on either of those statuesque faces. When the review was over, we had barely time to rush back to the hotel to dress for the banquet and reception at the Palace. On this important occasion I wore my first Court train, and very proud I felt as I drove off with my father in the carriage.

The Palace grounds were brilliantly lighted by thousands of coloured lanterns and little lamps. As I stepped out of the brougham into the large entrance-hall, where already many of the guests had assembled, and had my train arranged by two of the gold-laced attendants, I felt as if I were living in some other age, being no longer only an English country girl, but some Japanese Princess of old Japan.

After passing down endless corridors brilliantly lit with countless candles, along highly polished and very slippery floors, we arrived at the banqueting-hall. I presently found myself sitting with the Chinese Minister, Mr. Wong, on my right and a little Japanese Admiral on my left. My father was some way down on the other side.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten sight. Over five hundred guests were present, seated at long tables, which were exquisitely decorated with orchids, roses, ferns, and every kind of fruit in silver dishes. All the dinner-service was also of solid silver. At one end of the hall, a little raised and apart, sat the Emperor and Empress. The latter wore a European dress of rich white satin embroidered all over with silver; and masses of priceless diamonds were round her neck and in her dress. On her head was a small crown studded with precious stones. On either side sat the Royal Princes and Princesses; they all wore the Grand Cross Order of Japan--a broad orange and white ribbon. Every conceivable uniform seemed to be represented--Diplomats, Generals, Admirals, and a few foreigners in Court dress.

The dinner lasted nearly three hours, and, to judge by the manner His Excellency Mr. Wong appreciated every dish, it must have been a very good one. Mr. Wong was a tall, oldish man with a shrewd, parchment-like face. He spoke English well and said he was a natural philosopher. He had gorgeous brocades and thick furs lining his long robes. I asked him



why he did not wear these brocades outside at night for variety, which idea seemed much to amuse him. He told me his jade ring was worth five thousand dollars. It certainly was a lovely green stone.

The little Japanese Admiral, who spoke no English, tried to entertain me by making all sorts of figures out of his bread. At each course he asked for a fresh roll, and, by the end of dinner, we had an array of minute bread soldiers, ladies and animals on the table before us, really most cleverly contrived.

Before the banquet was half finished I felt I could eat no more, but my two neighbours seemed so distressed when I passed a dish, that I felt obliged to taste everything.

Each guest had before his plate a stork made of solid silver, beautifully chased, standing on a little silver box, with two tortoises at the foot, also in silver. These were presented by their Majesties as souvenirs of their silver wedding. The stork is the emblem of happiness in Japan and the tortoise of long life. Before leaving, we were also presented with silver medals, coined especially for the occasion with an inscription, and enclosed in a black and silver lacquer box.

After the banquet we went to the throne-room, where seats were arranged for two thousand guests, many being present who had not attended the dinner. There was a stage, and some very curious acting was performed--old Japanese plays, with weird Japanese music, which resembled cats on a roof more than anything I have ever heard.

The solemnity of the large audience, the weird acting and the appalling music suddenly inspired me with a wild desire to laugh, and I only saved myself from disgrace by bending my head low and trying to think of everything sad I could recollect. It was no use; I was rapidly becoming hysterical, when a kind little Japanese lady, thinking I was feeling faint, offered me her scent-bottle. This restored me to my senses, and I repressed my feelings until the end of the entertainment.

The Emperor and Empress were present, sitting in state together on their thrones. During the whole performance they hardly moved a muscle of their faces, the sign of high breeding in Japan, but the poor Empress looked very pale and exhausted before the end, and neither she nor the Emperor attended the supper to which we were all bidden before leaving the palace.

Truly it was a strange and unique ceremony.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another entertainment of interest to which we went some time later was a

ball given at the Chinese Legation by their Excellencies the Minister and Lady Yü, who had succeeded my old friend and philosopher, Mr. Wong, in Tokio. Looking at the large cosmopolitan company gathered together, all apparently on the most friendly and cordial terms, it was hard to believe that there had ever been war between China and Japan, or that even then there were strained relations between several of the countries whose representatives were there on apparently the most friendly and cordial terms. However, I suppose even the most zealous statesman must at times put aside his official capacity and yield to the enjoyment of the moment, and this they certainly seemed to be doing on the present occasion.

The Chinese Legation is a large European building of red brick, commanding one of the best situations in Tokio. But for its yellow flag flying aloft on fête-days and a few Chinese 'monban,' or guards, at the gates, there is nothing to distinguish it from any of the other official residences in the capital. The Legation is furnished in European style, with curtains and coverings of bright-coloured brocades, and has a large ball-room, with a parquet floor and electric light. On this important evening the walls were decorated with Chinese weapons and flags, arranged very effectively. The guests, who numbered between two and three hundred, arrived shortly after nine o'clock; they included nearly all the Japanese Ministers of State and high officials, the various Corps Diplomatiques and their staffs, the Russian Admiral and a number of Russian officers, and also the greater part of the foreign community of Tokio.

On arrival, we were met at the entrance by an imposing group of Chinese officials, who escorted us two by two across the hall and up a long flight of stairs to the dressing-room. After delivering over our cloaks and wraps to the quaintest and most picturesque-looking little maid-servants, we were marched arm in arm solemnly in procession downstairs to the drawing-room, where the Minister and Lady Yü were waiting to receive us. Lady Yü wore a European dress of violet satin and lace, and had a Court train trimmed with ostrich-feathers; although she is usually seen in her national costume. She is a nice-looking woman, with a kind, pleasant face. By birth she is American-Japanese, her father having married and settled in Shanghai. Her two daughters, Miss Lizzie and Miss Nelly Yü, were also in European dresses of white silk. They are bright-looking girls, very popular in Tokio society. All three speak English fluently. The Minister, however, speaks only Chinese, but, I believe, understands a good deal of the conversation going on around him. He is a native of the province of Manchu, in the North of China, and, like most of the inhabitants of that part of the country, is above the average height and a powerfully-made man. He adheres entirely to his Chinese dress, and was attired in a long coat of yellow brocade, lined with white Mongolian fur.

There are two sons, the eldest about twenty-one years of age, who is already married, and is a proud father--the other a boy of about seventeen. They both seemed thoroughly to enjoy the dancing, although their long satin petticoats and curious high shoes must have been somewhat inconvenient. They are being educated by French and English governesses, and one of them confided to me that his mother fines him 10 sen (= 2½d.) whenever he speaks Chinese!

A number of Chinese guests were present, their gorgeous, embroidered garments adding much to the general effect of the ballroom, as did also the gay uniforms of the various naval and military officers. There was a curious mixture of costumes. Chinese in Chinese dress, Chinese in European dress, Japanese \_à l'Anglaise\_, Japanese \_à la Japonaise\_, and Europeans in every imaginable combination of colour and style; some toilettes as much 'up-to-date' as the distance from the land of fashions permitted, others evidently desirous of striking out a line of their own. One American lady had actually draped herself in a Japanese kimono, but in a way that no Japanese lady would dream of appearing. I also noticed a German lady in a dress of pure white.

Perhaps, however, they imagined it was a fancy-dress ball! Contrary to the Chinese dress, which is a combination of the most vivid colouring, the Japanese ladies over twenty--in fact, even younger--wear nothing but the most sober colours--grays, drabs, fawns; and the elderly ladies are generally seen in black, the only adornment being their crest embroidered on the back of their kimonos. The men and boys wear gray, dark blue, and black ukatas.

The cotillon was led by Miss Yü and a secretary of the Russian Legation, and included some pretty and original figures. The Russian \_contredanses\_ seemed to be especially appreciated, and the fun had waxed fast and furious towards the small hours of the morning when we took our departure. In fact, the ball was a great success in every way, and the general originality of the entertainment added much to its charm.

Some of the guests were a little disappointed in not having a real Chinese supper; but when I mention a few of the palatable dishes that were served to us at a Chinese dinner at which we were once present, I think you will agree with me that we had a lucky escape.

The chief dainties at that delectable feast--which, by-the-by, lasted three hours and a half--were swallows'-nest soup, a very expensive dish, I believe; sharks' fins, more or less eatable; eggs, which had been buried for several months and had become the consistency and colour of old Stilton cheese; and many other similar dainties which I fail to remember, but all swimming in the inevitable and savoury Chinese sauce made of pig and goose fat. Of course, tastes differ, but I own to

preferring the more commonplace chicken-and-ham supper menu to the above delicacies.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another ceremony of a very different character at which I was soon afterwards present, was the Shinto funeral of His Imperial Highness Prince Arizugawa, uncle to the present Emperor. There is a most remarkable custom in Japan--that any person of Royal blood who dies away from home must have his death concealed until his body can be removed to his own palace. On this occasion, for several days after the Prince's death was an open secret, official bulletins were issued describing his condition as very critical. On the arrival of the coffin at the Imperial Palace in Tokio, however, his death was publicly announced to have taken place--quite a week later than was really the case.

By an early hour the streets of Tokio were thronged with an expectant crowd, all in their best attire--a picturesque gathering, very different from our sober-coloured crowd in England. Death to a Japanese does not inspire the same dread and awe with which we are accustomed to associate it.

The day was all one could desire--one of those brilliant frosty days which make the winter of Japan so delightful. The funeral procession left the palace about 9 a.m., preceded by a large number of mounted troops; and the roads were lined by the infantry to keep back the crowd. Not wishing to follow the procession at a foot-pace for over two hours--the Imperial burial-ground being nearly five miles from the Prince's palace--my father and I started an hour later and, driving by a shortcut, reached our destination in good time. Only those having tickets were admitted into the Temple grounds, but there was a very large gathering--almost every nation being represented. The gay uniforms of the Japanese Officials, Admirals, and Generals; the entire Corps Diplomatique, Consuls from Yokohama, the officers from the Russian and German men-of-war, and the Chinese and Koreans in their quaint dress, all formed a brilliant gathering, standing out against the dark background of the great cryptomeria trees.

Several ladies were present, all in deep mourning; among them we noticed two of the Royal Princesses. Refreshments were provided in a small Japanese house in the grounds; and the hot coffee and sandwiches seemed much appreciated by many who had come up by an early train from Yokohama that morning. As the faint notes of the bugle announced the approach of the procession, we all formed into a long line near the entrance-gate.

The priests walked first, arrayed in white silk kimonos, with curious erections of stiff black silk on their heads, somewhat resembling the helmet of Britannia. Then followed the choir, playing a weird

incantation on their curious instruments. As I have said before, those who have not heard Japanese music can hardly realize how utterly unlike it is to the music of the West. Harmony it has none, and the wailing, dirge-like sounds are somewhat trying to the uninitiated. Notwithstanding, I noticed a solemn dignity in the mournful strains which had never struck me before.

Great numbers of wreaths, also enormous erections of artificial and natural flowers in bamboo stands, were carried by men in white cloaks. Some of these offerings were over twelve feet in height and required two men to carry them. These were followed by the late Prince's servants, his horses, then more priests--one carrying on a wooden stand a pair of shoes for the use of the departed spirit on its journey to Paradise or Hades, as the case might be. Then came the coffin, enclosed in a plain white wood sarcophagus, from which appeared a piece of the sleeve of the dead Prince's kimono, which, I must own, produced a most uncanny effect.

A Shinto corpse is always buried in a sitting position, fully dressed, with head bent to the knees in attitude of prayer. The coffin was carried by a dozen men, all in white and bare-headed. Young Prince Arizugawa followed immediately after his father's coffin. He was in old Court dress--a petticoat of black silk, very full, giving the appearance of a divided skirt and a white silk kimono. He carried a long, narrow piece of wood, which he held in front of him, on which, doubtless, were inscribed prayers. His head-dress was somewhat similar to that worn by the priests, but at the back of the head was fastened a large black wire hoop covered with silk. In appearance the Prince is a small man, even for a Japanese, but very dignified in manner, with a clever, rather sad face. The ceremony must have been a trying one for him, as he marched on foot in the centre of the procession from one end of Tokio to the other, and the Shinto funeral rites, as far as the immediate relatives of the dead are concerned, compelled them to remain by the coffin until after sunset.

Princess Arizugawa, the Empress's messenger and the late Prince's mother were also in old Japanese Court dress--enormous trousers of bright-red material and white silk kimonos. Their hair was dressed in the most fantastic style, part of it standing out on either side of the head in stiff wings, the back view of the head resembling a heart in shape, the rest of the hair falling loosely down the back. The poor little ladies seemed to experience some difficulty in walking in their high clogs and stiff trousers. I imagine they must prefer even European dress to this quaint, but unpractical style.

After waiting about an hour, while the coffin and floral offerings were being arranged, we were conducted to the other end of the Temple grounds, where a temporary altar had been erected. The priests, who were eight in number, after clapping their hands before the altar to call the

attention of the gods and bowing to the ground repeatedly, chanted several long prayers, and the choir again began its dirge-like wailing. Then the priests in turn placed a small white wooden stand in front of the altar-steps, on each of which was a dish containing different sorts of food. First, two fish were presented, then a pair of wild duck, game, meat, rice, bread, fruits, and lastly, a bottle of saké. Food is always offered at a Shinto funeral for use of the spirit of the departed, who is supposed to travel for fifty days before his fate is finally decided by the gods; and during that period prayers are incessantly offered up by the priests and the family of the deceased until the fiftieth day, when judgment is supposed to be pronounced as to his future state.

Before leaving, each guest in turn, beginning with the messengers of the Emperor and Empress, placed before the coffin a small branch of a tree, from which hung strips of white paper cut into little angular bunches, intended to represent the offerings of cloth which in ancient days were tied to the branches of the 'cleyera' tree in festival time. When our turn came, over a hundred branches had been presented, and, on leaving, we passed a large crowd with their offerings in their hands. The whole ceremony was exceedingly simple. Indeed, the chief characteristic of the Shinto religion is its simplicity; and 'to follow the dictates of your own conscience and to obey the Mikado' embraces the whole of its religious teaching. The present religion of the country is Shinto, but many of the Buddhist ceremonies have become mingled with it, although each religion has its distinctive marks.



Wharton

## PICTURESQUE MILAN

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Italian Backgrounds*, by Edith Wharton

## I

It is hard to say whether the stock phrase of the stock tourist--“there is so little to see in Milan”--redounds most to the derision of the speaker or to the glory of Italy. That such a judgment should be possible, even to the least instructed traveller, implies a surfeit of impressions procurable in no other land; since, to the hastiest observation, Milan could hardly seem lacking in interest when compared to any but Italian cities. From comparison with the latter, even, it suffers only on a superficial estimate, for it is rich in all that makes the indigenous beauty of Italy, as opposed to the pseudo-Gothicisms, the trans-Alpine points and pinnacles, which Ruskin taught a submissive generation of art critics to regard as the typical expression of the Italian spirit. The guide-books, long accustomed to draw their Liebig’s extract of art from the pages of this school of critics, have kept the tradition alive by dwelling only on the monuments which conform to perpendicular ideals, and by apologetic allusions to the “monotony” and “regularity” of Milan--as though endeavouring in advance to placate the traveller for its not looking like Florence or Siena!

Of late, indeed, a new school of writers, among whom Mr. J. W. Anderson, and the German authors, Messrs. Ebe and Gurlitt, deserve the first mention, have broken through this conspiracy of silence, and called attention to the intrinsically Italian art of the post-Renaissance period; the period which, from Michael Angelo to Juvara, has been marked in sculpture and architecture (though more rarely in painting) by a series of memorable names. Signor Franchetti’s admirable monograph on Bernini, and the recent volume on Tiepolo in the Knackfuss series of Künstler-Monographien have done their part in this redistribution of values; and it is now possible for the traveller to survey the course of Italian art with the impartiality needful for its due enjoyment, and to admire, for instance, the tower of the Mangia without scorning the palace of the Consulta.

## II

But, it may be asked, though Milan will seem more interesting to the emancipated judgment, will it appear more picturesque? Picturesqueness is, after all, what the Italian pilgrim chiefly seeks; and the current notion of the picturesque is a purely Germanic one, connoting Gothic steeples, pepper-pot turrets, and the huddled steepness of the northern burgh.

Italy offers little, and Milan least of all, to satisfy these requirements. The Latin ideal demanded space, order, and nobility of composition. But does it follow that picturesqueness is incompatible

with these? Take up one of Piranesi's etchings--those strange compositions in which he sought to seize the spirit of a city or a quarter by a mingling of its most characteristic features. Even the northern conception of the picturesque must be satisfied by the sombre wildness of these studies--here a ruined aqueduct, casting its shade across a lonely stretch of ground tufted with acanthus, there a palace colonnade through which the moonlight sweeps on a winter wind, or the recesses of some mighty Roman bath where cloaked figures are huddled in dark confabulation.

Canaletto's black-and-white studies give, in a lesser degree, the same impression of the grotesque and the fantastic--the under-side of that \_barocchismo\_ so long regarded as the smirk on the face of a conventional age.

But there is another, a more typically Italian picturesqueness, gay rather than sinister in its suggestions, made up of lights rather than of shadows, of colour rather than of outline, and this is the picturesqueness of Milan. The city abounds in vivid effects, in suggestive juxtapositions of different centuries and styles--in all those incidental contrasts and surprises which linger in the mind after the catalogued "sights" have faded. Leaving behind the wide modern streets--which have the merit of having been modernized under Eugène Beauharnais rather than under King Humbert--one enters at once upon some narrow byway overhung by the grated windows of a seventeenth-century palace, or by the delicate terra-cotta apse of a \_cinque-cento\_ church. Everywhere the forms of expression are purely Italian, with the smallest possible admixture of that Gothic element which marks the old free cities of Central Italy. The rocca Sforzesca (the old Sforza castle) and the houses about the Piazza de' Mercanti are the chief secular buildings recalling the pointed architecture of the north; and the older churches are so old that they antedate Gothic influences, and lead one back to the round-arched basilican type. But in the line of national descent what exquisite varieties the Milanese streets present! Here, for instance, is the Corinthian colonnade of San Lorenzo, the only considerable fragment of ancient Mediolanum, its last shaft abutting on a Gothic archway against which clings a flower-decked shrine. Close by, one comes on the ancient octagonal church of San Lorenzo, while a few minutes' drive leads to where the Borromeo palace looks across a quiet grassy square at the rococo front of the old family church, flanked by a fine bronze statue of the great saint and cardinal.

The Palazzo Borromeo is itself a notable factor in the picturesqueness of Milan. The entrance leads to a court-yard enclosed in an ogive arcade surmounted by pointed windows in terra-cotta mouldings. The walls of this court are still frescoed with the Borromean crown, and the \_Humilitas\_ of the haughty race; and a doorway leads into the



muniment-room, where the archives of the house are still stored, and where, on the damp stone walls, Michelino da Milano has depicted the scenes of a fifteenth-century villeggiatura. Here the noble ladies of the house, in high fluted turbans and fantastic fur-trimmed gowns, may be seen treading the measures of a mediæval dance with young gallants in parti-coloured hose, or playing at various games--the \_jeu de tarots\_, and a kind of cricket played with a long wooden bat; while in the background rise the mountains about Lake Maggiore and the peaked outline of the Isola Bella, then a bare rock unadorned with gardens and architecture. These frescoes, the only existing works of a little-known Lombard artist, are suggestive in style of Pisanello's dry and vigorous manner, and as records of the private life of the Italian nobility in the fifteenth century they are second only to the remarkable pictures of the Schifanoia at Ferrara.

Not far from the Borromeo palace, another doorway leads to a different scene: the great cloister of the Ospedale Maggiore, one of the most glorious monuments that man ever erected to his fellows. The old hospitals of Italy were famous not only for their architectural beauty and great extent, but for their cleanliness and order and the enlightened care which their inmates received. Northern travellers have recorded their wondering admiration of these lazarets, which seemed as stately as palaces in comparison with the miserable pest-houses north of the Alps. What must have been the astonishment of such a traveller, whether German or English, on setting foot in the principal court of the Milanese hospital, enclosed in its vast cloister enriched with traceries and medallions of terra-cotta, and surmounted by the arches of an open loggia whence the patients could look down on a peaceful expanse of grass and flowers! Even now, one wonders whether this poetizing of philanthropy, this clothing of charity in the garb of beauty, may not have had its healing uses: whether the ugliness of the modern hospital may not make it, in another sense, as unhygienic as the more picturesque buildings it has superseded? It is at least pleasant to think of the poor sick people sunning themselves in the beautiful loggia of the Ospedale Maggiore, or sitting under the magnolia-trees in the garden, while their blue-gowned and black-veiled nurses move quietly through the cloisters at the summons of the chapel-bell.

But one need not enter a court-yard or cross a threshold to appreciate the variety and colour of Milan. The streets themselves are full of charming detail--\_quattro-cento\_ marble portals set with medallions of bushy-headed Sforzas in round caps and plaited tunics; windows framed in terra-cotta wreaths of fruit and flowers; iron balconies etching their elaborate arabesques against the stucco house-fronts; mighty doorways flanked by Atlantides, like that of Pompeo Leoni's house (the \_Casa degli Omenoni\_) and of the Jesuit seminary; or yellow-brown rococo churches with pyramids, broken pediments, flying angels, and vases filled with wrought-iron palm-branches. It is in summer that

these streets are at their best. Then the old gardens overhanging the Naviglio--the canal which intersects Milan with a layer of Venice--repeat in its waters their marble loggias hung with the vine, and their untrained profusion of roses and camellias. Then, in the more aristocratic streets, the palace doorways yield vistas of double and triple court-yards, with creeper-clad arcades enclosing spaces of shady turf, and terminating perhaps in a fountain set in some splendid architectural composition against the inner wall of the building. In summer, too, the dark archways in the humbler quarters of the town are brightened by fruit-stalls embowered in foliage, and heaped with such melons, figs and peaches as would have driven to fresh extravagance the exuberant brush of a Flemish fruit-painter. Then again, at the turn of a street, one comes across some little church just celebrating the feast of its patron saint with a brave display of garlands and red hangings; while close by a cavernous \_bottega\_ has been festooned with more garlands and with bright nosegays, amid which hang the painted candles and other votive offerings designed to attract the small coin of the faithful.

### III

Yet Milan is not dependent on the seasons for this midsummer magic of light and colour. For dark days it keeps its store of warmth and brightness hidden behind palace walls and in the cold dusk of church and cloister. Summer in all its throbbing heat has been imprisoned by Tiepolo in the great ceiling of the Palazzo Clerici: that revel of gods and demi-gods, and mortals of all lands and races, who advance with linked hands out of the rosy vapours of dawn. Nor are loftier colour-harmonies wanting. On the walls of San Maurizio Maggiore, Luini's virgin martyrs move as in the very afterglow of legend: that hesitating light in which the fantastic becomes probable, and the boundaries between reality and vision fade; while tints of another sort, but as tender, as harmonious, float through the dusk of the sacristy of Santa Maria delle Grazie, a dim room panelled with intarsia-work, with its grated windows veiled by vine-leaves.

But nothing in Milan approaches in beauty the colour-scheme of the Portinari chapel behind the choir of Sant' Eustorgio. In Italy, even, there is nothing else exactly comparable to this masterpiece of collaboration between architect and painter. At Ravenna, the tomb of Galla Placidia and the apse of San Vitale glow with richer hues, and the lower church of Assisi is unmatched in its shifting mystery of chiar'-oscuro; but for pure light, for a clear shadowless scale of iridescent tints, what can approach the Portinari chapel? Its most striking feature is the harmony of form and colour which makes the decorative design of Michelozzo flow into and seem a part of the exquisite frescoes of Vincenzo Foppa. This harmony is not the result

of any voluntary feint, any such trickery of the brush as the later decorative painters delighted in. In the Portinari chapel, architecture and painting are kept distinct in treatment, and the fusion between them is effected by unity of line and colour, and still more, perhaps, by an identity of sentiment, which keeps the whole chapel in the same mood of blitheness,—a mood which makes it difficult to remember that the chapel is the mausoleum of a martyred saint. But Saint Peter Martyr's marble sarcophagus, rich and splendid as it is, somehow fails to distract the attention from its setting. There are so many mediæval monuments like it in Italy—and there is but one Portinari chapel. From the cupola, with its scales of pale red and blue, overlapping each other like the breast-plumage of a pigeon, and terminating in a terra-cotta frieze of dancing angels, who swing between them great bells of fruit and flowers, the eye is led by insensible gradations of tint to Foppa's frescoes in the spandrels—iridescent saints and angels in a setting of pale classical architecture—and thence to another frieze of terra-cotta seraphs with rosy-red wings against a background of turquoise-green; this lower frieze resting in turn on pilasters of pale-green adorned with white stucco \_rilievi\_ of little bell-ringing angels. It is only as a part of this colour-scheme that the central sarcophagus really affects one—the ivory tint of its old marble forming a central point for the play of light, and allying itself with the sumptuous hues of Portinari's dress, in the fresco which represents the donator of the chapel kneeling before his patron saint.

#### IV

The picturesqueness of Milan has overflowed on its environs, and there are several directions in which one may prolong the enjoyment of its characteristic art. The great Certosa of Pavia can, alas, no longer be included in a category of the picturesque. Secularized, catalogued, railed off from the sight-seer, who is hurried through its endless corridors on the heels of a government custodian, it still ministers to the sense of beauty, but no longer excites those subtler sensations which dwell in the atmosphere of a work of art rather than in itself. Such sensations must be sought in the other deserted Certosa at Chiaravalle. The abbey church, with its noble colonnaded cupola, is still one of the most conspicuous objects in the flat landscape about Milan; but within all is falling to ruin, and one feels the melancholy charm of a beautiful building which has been allowed to decay as naturally as a tree. The disintegrating touch of nature is less cruel than the restoring touch of man, and the half-ruined frescoes and intarsia-work of Chiaravalle retain more of their original significance than the carefully-guarded treasures of Pavia.

Less melancholy than Chiaravalle, and as yet unspoiled by the touch

of official preservation, is the pilgrimage church of the Madonna of Saronno. A long avenue of plane-trees leads from the village to the sumptuous marble façade of the church, an early Renaissance building with ornamental additions of the seventeenth century. Within, it is famous for the frescoes of Luini in the choir, and of Gaudenzio Ferrari in the cupola. The Luini frescoes are full of a serene impersonal beauty. Painted in his latest phase, when he had fallen under the influence of Raphael and the "grand manner," they lack the intimate charm of his early works; yet the Lombard note, the Leonardesque quality, lingers here and there in the side-long glance of the women, and in the yellow-haired beauty of the adolescent heads; while it finds completer expression in the exquisite single figures of Saint Catherine and Saint Apollonia.

If these stately compositions are less typical of Luini than, for instance, the frescoes of San Maurizio Maggiore, or of the Casa Pelucca (now in the Brera), Gaudenzio's cupola seems, on the contrary, to sum up in one glorious burst of expression all his fancy had ever evoked and his hand longed to embody. It seems to have been given to certain artists to attain, once at least, to this full moment of expression: to Titian, for instance, in the Bacchus and Ariadne, to Michael Angelo in the monuments of the Medici, to Giorgione in the Sylvan Concert of the Louvre. In other works they may reveal greater powers, more magnificent conceptions; but once only, perhaps, is it given to each to achieve the perfect equipoise of mind and hand; and in that moment even the lesser artists verge on greatness. Gaudenzio found his opportunity in the cupola of Saronno, and for once he rises above the charming anecdotic painter of Varallo to the brotherhood of the masters. It is as the expression of a mood that his power reveals itself--the mood of heavenly joyousness, so vividly embodied in his circle of choiring angels that form seems to pass into sound, and the dome to be filled with a burst of heavenly jubilation. With unfaltering hand he has sustained this note of joyousness. Nowhere does his invention fail or his brush lag behind it. The sunny crowding heads, the flying draperies, the fluttering scores of the music, are stirred as by a wind of inspiration--a breeze from the celestial pastures. The walls of the choir seem to resound with one of the angel-choruses of "Faust," or with the last chiming lines of the "Paradiso." Happy the artist whose full powers find voice in such a key!

## V

The reader who has followed these desultory wanderings through Milan has but touched the hem of her garment. In the Brera, the Ambrosiana, the Poldi-Pezzoli gallery, and the magnificent new Archæological

Museum, now fittingly housed in the old castle of the Sforzas, are treasures second only to those of Rome and Florence. But these are among the catalogued riches of the city. The guide-books point to them, they lie in the beaten track of sight-seeing, and it is rather in the intervals between such systematized study of the past, in the parentheses of travel, that one obtains those more intimate glimpses which help to compose the image of each city, to preserve its personality in the traveller's mind.



## SULLA SPONDA PEL L'ONTA RIO AZZURRO

*Foglie Di Erba - Walt Whitman*

Versione Di Luigi Gamberale

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Non è osso mi semplice racconto ? Una lima f Un grazioso non-  
nulla ? — È in esso, la buona, vecchia causa ?

Non ha esso strisciato lungamente alle calcagna «lei poeti, dei po-  
liticanti-, «lei letterati delle nazioni mimiche ?

Presume esso che sia sempre vivo, qui, ciò che notoriamente è  
morto ?

Risponde ai bisogni universali ? Migliorerà i costumi ?

Risona in esso con voce di tromba la superba vittoria dell Unione  
nella guerra di secessione ?

Può la tua rappresentazione affrontare i campi aperti e le spiagge  
«lei mare ?

Mi assorbirà in sè così, come io assorbo il cibo e l'aria, perchè  
essi riappariscano di nuovo nella mia forza, nel mio incesso, nel mio  
volto ?

Hanno dato ad esso il loro contributo realtà vere ? Fattori originali e non amanuensi ?

Affronta egli, faccia a faccia, le scoperte, le dimensioni, i fatti moderni ?

Che significato esso lui per le persone dell'America, pel loro progresso e per le loro città ? Per Chicago, pel Canadà, per l'Arkansas ?

Vede esso, dietro i custodi apparenti, i custodi veri, ritti, minacciosi, silenziosi : i meccanici, il Manahattanese, gli uomini occidentali, gli uomini del mezzogiorno, significanti tutti lo stesso così nella loro apatia come nella prontezza del loro amore ?

Vede esso quel che alla fine accade, ed è sempre accaduto a qualsiasi temporeggiatore, rappezzatoli, estraneo, favoreggiatore di una classe, allarmista, infedele che abbia mai preteso qualcosa dall'America ?

E che cosa alla negligenza che disprezza e deride ?

Ecco, la via è cosparsa della polvere degli scheletri,

Mentre sui marciapiedi altri scheletri sono sprezzantemente am mucchiati.



## LETTERS OF A DIRECTOR, by Anonymous

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Film Truth; November, 1920*

Dear Liz: Three cheers, kiddo! Hoorayeureka! I've discovered the place where they bury the bodies. The secret is mine. Within six months, dearie, I'll be drawing down a thousand a week and owing more money than the national debt. I'm going to be one of the big, bigger, biggest directors.

Don't laugh, sweetie. I know I've been piking my way making good pictures for a slim three hundred a week for so long that you won't believe I can step out. But listen—I'm going to be a big leaguer if I have to wear a pillow slip on my coat lapel. Watch my errors, Liz.

I've diagnosed my own case—and do you know what has been responsible for the anaemia of the bankroll that has afflicted me all these years? My early training was all wrong. Every time I spend a dollar I squeeze it till the birdie cuckoos "One hundred cents!"

I guess that year I spent in school spoiled me.

I took them there copy book Maxims too seriously. You know the stuff I mean. About—"Two bits saved is a jitney earned," and "Save the pennies and the dollars will draw four per cent."

Well, here I've been in the fillum flurry a dozen years little one, before the truth dawned on me. They shoulda put silencers on them Maxims or else handed them to you with interpretations and reservations. Chief of which same is this here: "Nothing in these articles shall be construed as referring to THE BOSS'S MONEY."

His bankroll is made to be shot; he isn't happy unless it's riddled. He won't say "Good Morning" to you unless you caused him to say "Good Night, Mr. Receiver," the day before.

I'm starting on a new picture now, Liz, and to tell the truth if I hired an oil promoter for property man I don't think I could spend more than fifty thousand dollars making it a good picture. But I've learned the secret—and if I break a leg doing it I am going to take more time on this picture than George Loane Tucker needs; I'm going to spend more money than Von Stroheim; I'm going to build more sets and tear 'em down faster than Mickey Neilan at his best; I'm going to have a bigger hospital bill than a Holubar production.

If I don't spend more than two hundred and fifty thousand on this picture I'll be willing to take a job making LoKo comedies. Of course, two hundred and fifty thousand doesn't put me in the class with the big boys but it's a pretty fair start for a guy with wrong upbringing.

It was this nut Stroheim that give me the idea. You know, Liz, when this Von got through serving the time in the army that all them Heinies has to, he came here and first broke into the United States histories in the packing room of a department store. He studied stagecraft wrapping planks around "This Side Up" signs.

He musta come to Los in one of his own shipping cases for when I first saw him hanging around the studios looking for extra parts he didn't look as though he'd ever possessed Mister Santa Fe's price. The boys gave him a rough deal in those days—you know it wasn't a popular time for gents with the "Von" handle on their monickers. But we had so many beastly Berlin pictures that we all had to use him. He played more German captains than there were in the Kaiser's army.

Then one day he negotiates a ten minute loan of Carl Laemmle's ear and comes out of the office with the title "Director." He earned the brackets by guaranteeing to make a picture for twenty thousand, and faithfully fulfilled his promise by spending not a cent more than fifty. What's more it was a good picture.

Universal foolishly thought the gink would be grateful for the opportunity they gave him so they turned loose the noisiest advertising and publicity they could. That queered it. He started going loco then and he's three laps ahead of a flea-bitten coyote ever since.

Stroheim spends more money now on his own clothes than he guaranteed to make that first picture for. Out here where every director has to look like a Hartschaffner ad touched up by a futurist painter he manages to hold the jazz record. What a swath he cuts with the extra girls!

As for his pictures—if he reaches a cent less than five hundred thousand on this "Foolish Wives" he's making now he'll probably be so peeved he'll try hari-kari. Why, do you know, Liz, he's spent enough money building Monte Carlo's up at Monterey to relieve the housing shortage in six states!

Do I blame him? Not a bit. If he didn't toss the coin that way people wouldn't believe he was one of the biggest directors. His company would probably fire him for getting old-fashioned. Then they'd bail Ponzi and put him on the payroll.

Once you hadda put a close-up in every ten feet to be ranked an up-to-date director; now you have to find new ways for filling up the Home for Incurably Insane Cashiers.

Another fellow whose boss has to make the money with a machine is this here fellow Holubar. I think that Holubar and Stroheim musta formed some sorta grudge when they hung out together on the Universal lot. Now they take it out on the boss by racing neck and neck on the Expenditure Extravaganza.

Holubar's just finished his first independent feature starring his wife, Dorothy Phillips. "Man, Woman and Marriage" they calls it. Al Kaufman, who supplied the money, must agree that this married life is expensive. Here's one way they ran head-long into the subtreasury, Liz:

Holubar decides that a little prehistoric stuff showing a battle of the Amazons with the Male Brutes would be good stuff. So five hundred horses and five hundred dames are hired and turned loose for the action. The janes are in the near-nude, and beside you can't expect that many girls in one city to know how to handle horses, so quite a few of them take a



tumble when the battle reaches the rough stage. The first thing you know the ambulances are chasing to the Holubar lot as though they belonged in the story.

Continuity calls for the women losing the battle for the obvious reason disclosed when a later scene shows three hundred of them nursing babies. A hurry call is sent out for three hundred infants willing to yawl a few hours for the movies. How that assistant director got 'em I don't know—but he did.

"Shucks," says someone then. "Now we gotta get three hundred women to nurse the infantry." That was a tough assignment—but some miracle worker produced the women.

Do you know what happened then, Liz? The kids went on strike! They might be of the nursing age but hang it, they were particular where and when they nursed And they had no sympathy for the battery of cameras anxious to grind.

All was at a standstill. What could be done? Then a clever chap who deserves a Croix de Gerry Society had an idea. A few whispered words, hurried telephone call, truck load of honey arrives. Honey applied to the proper spot, youngsters start to work with a will. Cameras click.

Isn't it a great life in the West, Liz?—Your own ex-chauffeur friend, Bill.



## INSIDE THE BRAIN OF A MOVIE STAR

Project Gutenberg's *Breaking Into The Movies*, by John Emerson and Anita Loos

"But they have no brains!" someone is sure to say.

That sort of thing is rather cheap cynicism. As a matter of fact, they have plenty of brains, but of their own peculiar sort. A movie actor, like any other type of artist, is an emotional, temperamental creature; but the problem which worries him the most is one of intellect rather than emotion; in short, just how to control the reactions inside that discredited gray matter of his.

Every movie actor--and you, too, if you enter this field--is at one time or another confronted with the perplexing problem of just how much thought he should allow to go into his work; that is, whether his acting should be emotional or intellectual. The question resolves itself into this:

Does an actor feel?

Should he feel?

There are two schools of thought on this seemingly academic but in reality most important subject.

First are those who say that an actor must feel the part he is playing. The greatest actors, they say, have always been those who wore themselves out in an hour's time, because they felt the emotions they portrayed. They tell stories such as that of Mrs. Kendall, who, having lost her own child, electrified an English audience by her portrayal of the bereaved mother in "East Lynne" to such an extent that women leaped to their feet in the pit, shouting, "No more, no more." They point to the fact that the great stars of the screen and the stage alike are able to simulate the three reactions which are quite beyond the control of the will--pallor, blushing, and the sudden perspiration which comes with great terror or pain. This, they say, is proof positive that these actors are feeling every emotion as they enact it.

The second group declares that all this is nonsense and that if an actor really felt his part he would lose control of himself, and perhaps actually murder some other actor in a fight scene. Acting, they say, is an art wherein the artist, by the use of his intellect, is able to simulate that which he does not feel--using his face merely as the painter uses his canvas. The moment an actor begins to enter into his part, his acting is either overdone or underdone and the scene is ruined. The whole trick of it, they add, is to keep perfectly cool and know exactly what you are doing, no matter how spectacular the scene.

Still a third school declares that both these views are wrong, and that acting is neither a matter of thought nor of emotion, but is purely imitative. An actor observes his own emotions as he experiences them in each crisis of his real life, they say, and remembers them so well that he is afterward able to reproduce them before the camera.

The truth of it seems to be that all of them are partly right and partly wrong. The great stars of the movies to-day, when one is able to draw them out on the subject, say that when they are acting they are thinking not about one thing but about several things. The brain is divided into different strata, and while one section is thinking about the part, another section is entering into it, while still a third stratum is busying itself with idle speculation about the cameraman and the director.

There are two important secrets, connected with the psychology of screen acting, which every beginner should know, even if he never makes use of them. The first is that of Preparation; the second, that of Auto-Suggestion.

A movie actor or actress is in a more difficult position, so far as the artistry of his work is concerned, than the players of the spoken drama. In the movies the scenes are nearly always taken out of sequence, the first last, the last first, and so forth. For that reason the motion picture stars have great difficulty in working themselves up to the proper "pitch" to play a scene, inasmuch as they have not been through the action which leads up to it.

The movie directors know this, and in most studios try to help them up to this "pitch" by employing small orchestras to play during the important scenes. In nearly every large studio where more than one company is working there are to be heard the faint strains of Sonata Pathetique, where some melancholy scene is being taken, or livelier music for a bit of comedy in another set. Also the directors are always behind the camera to guide their actors with spoken directions as the scene is made. This orchestra business has always seemed to us pure buncombe, but if the director or actor gets any fun out of it, it doesn't do any particular harm.

The wise movie actors of to-day are borrowing these two tricks of Preparation and Auto-Suggestion from their brethren of the stage.

Preparation consists merely of spending a little time before the scene is begun in going over the part, in thinking about it, and in trying really to feel all the emotions of the character in question. This seems a simple matter; but it makes the difference between real acting and routine work. Once an actor has carefully worked out the part for himself he can easily conform to the director's ideas; and once he has let himself feel his part he need waste no emotion upon it when on the "set," for his mimetic powers will reproduce his feelings of an hour before.

Auto-suggestion consists in working oneself up to the part before going

before the camera by various expedients. For example, one actor, before playing a part calling for extreme anger, spends some ten minutes in clenching his fists, swearing at the handiest fence post, setting his jaw--and so making himself really angry. It is not hard to reproduce emotion by these tricks of auto-suggestion. Try thinking of something sad--draw your face down--and before long you will be in a very glum mood. That is the way such stars as Norma Talmadge and Mary Pickford produce tears on short notice. Most people think they are tricks of make-up, such as drops of glycerine; as a matter of fact, it is a matter of puckering the face and a few gloomy thoughts.

All this sort of thing sounds very intricate and unnecessary. And yet it is the really practical side of screen acting. The psychology of each actor is different and his manner of preparing for a scene and of enacting it will be different. The important thing is that he be aware that there is such a thing as psychology, and that if he will only understand it as applied to himself he can improve his work as a film player.



## LA PASSION SELON SAINT JEAN DE J.-S. BACH

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Études*, by Jacques Rivière

C'est la musique de la contrition. Elle est possédée par la pensée du péché; elle s'accuse profondément; elle prie afin d'être pardonnée. Comme la prière, dont elle emprunte les modes invariables, elle est à la fois rigide et haletante.

Bach prend les idées l'une après l'autre. A chacune il s'attache jusqu'à l'avoir exprimée complètement; il ne la quitte pas qu'il ne l'ait épuisée. Il l'insère en une forme fixe, chœur, air ou récit, dont les lignes abstraites désignent d'avance tous les trajets par lesquels, pour l'explorer entière, il la faudra sillonner. A l'intérieur de cette forme, une grande musique fiévreuse et unie se développe; elle parcourt longuement l'espace qui lui est donné, elle le crible de ses pas nombreux, elle le couvre de sa marche précipitée et régulière. Admirable piétinement! Il n'est pas d'issue par où je puisse m'échapper; je suis conduit avec violence; je ne peux

qu'obéir à la main qui m'a saisi; il faut que \_j'éprouve\_ jusqu'au bout. Sous cette prise étroite et sévère, je me sens malmené comme par la pénitence.--Quand le texte qu'elle commente a été complètement \_exprimé\_, la musique longuement s'arrête; elle se rassemble toute; elle vient, avec une consciencieuse passion, se réunir sur la tonique. On discerne dans son ralentissement une satisfaction austère, comme en ceux qui n'ont agi qu'"afin que toutes choses fussent faites".

Les \_chœurs\_, les \_airs\_, et les \_chorals\_, forment la partie lyrique de la \_Passion selon Saint-Jean\_: avec dureté l'âme chrétienne fait l'application à soi des paroles de l'Evangile, tourne vers soi le grief du Sauveur. Dans les \_chœurs\_, l'orchestre tout de suite entreprend ses rapides et rigides montées, l'ascension sombre de ses traits uniformes, son grand mouvement indiscontinu qui se recouvre sans fatigue. Les voix ajoutent la régularité âpre de leurs échanges; jamais la phrase n'est délaissée par elles, elle s'enchaîne sans cesse avec elle-même et la reprise perpétuelle de son intégrité dessine des ondulations inflexibles. Toute cette musique est en proie aux amples pulsations de la prière, elle respire fortement, toute dressée et plaintive, elle s'agite comme un cœur bouleversé d'adoration.--Elle ne progresse pas; tout de suite elle énonce tout ce qu'elle a à dire, puis ne fait plus que le répéter. Mais la répétition même augmente peu à peu l'émotion jusqu'aux larmes: chaque retour pénètre d'une pitié nouvelle et plus forte. La prière ne compte que sur sa monotonie pour blesser l'âme à qui elle s'adresse, elle se recommence, elle se ressaisit elle-même, elle se tient de nouveau, pareille, entre ses propres mains et s'offre de nouveau, pareille, comme si elle ne découvrait pas de plus profond cri qu'elle-même.--Dans les \_chorals\_, la pensée est parcourue d'une musique plus lente; elle n'est plus couverte en tous sens, mais traversée avec douceur et exactitude d'un bout à l'autre. Le chant prend chaque phrase, la soulève jusqu'au faîte de son intensité contenue, puis la dépose; il s'appuie sur des silences pour que le cœur s'écoute pénétrer par la méditation.

La partie narrative est faite des \_récits évangéliques\_. La mélodie se déroule avec uniformité. Elle est accidentée, mais ses inflexions sont comme rituelles. Son discours est plein de mouvement, mais d'un mouvement prescrit une fois pour toutes. C'est qu'elle s'est faite servante des formidables paroles qu'il lui faut porter; par humilité elle s'est vêtue des habits les plus coutumiers; elle gravit le calvaire avec modestie. A la fin des récits seulement elle se permet parfois quelque emportement: "Alors Pilate fit prendre Jésus et le fit fouetter." L'énormité d'un tel crime possède si fort la pensée du musicien qu'il ne peut se séparer de cette parole, et, l'ayant saisie, il la traîne en une longue vocalise, l'appuie au fond de sa gorge jusqu'à l'horreur.--Parmi l'exacte monotonie de la narration, brusques, les réponses et les invectives de la foule éclatent en \_chœurs\_.

Une parole est à dire, préparée de toute éternité, annoncée par les prophètes! Voici que la foule se rue sur elle, s'empare d'elle, la prononce enfin et, pleine de rage, s'enivre de la répéter. Puis, parce que tout est accompli, elle se tait. Cris abrupts, brutalité haletante, haine spasmodique du chœur: "Kreuzige" (crucifie-le). Et, soudain, silence imprévu, interruption subite des voix: le peuple confusément s'étonne du crime qu'il vient de commettre, reste interdit, sans comprendre quelle fatalité le pousse.

En même temps qu'elle est une œuvre universelle, la \_Passion selon Saint-Jean\_ délicieusement garde un goût national. Je pense aux gravures sur bois des maîtres allemands: c'est bien le même calvaire, naïf et féroce, tout en oppositions. Autour du Christ accablé, je distingue le gros rire des bourreaux et ces faces bestiales et sommaires, où la cruauté se déchaîne en grimace.

1910.



## VEGETARIAN RECIPES

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Fast-Day Cookery*, by Grace Johnson

### 11. Bread Soup.

Boil two large onions in one pint of water, with twenty-four cloves, and a blade of mace, and twenty-four peppercorns. Let it boil till the onions are quite soft, then pass it through a sieve. Add two pints of milk, half a pound of bread crumbs passed through a sieve, pepper and salt to taste, and two ounces of butter; stir, let it come to the boil, and serve.

### 29. Carrot Puree.

Scrape and wash four large carrots; cut them into quarters, and boil

till quite soft; pass them through a sieve; cut up an onion into rings; chop up two beads of garlic, and fry these with twenty-four cloves a nice brown in two ounces of butter; then add the carrot \_purée\_, two and a half pints of water, three bay-leaves, a stick of cinnamon, a blade of mace, one packet of Edwards' White Soup. Pepper and salt to taste. Let it simmer gently for an hour. Strain again, and serve with fried bread cut into dice. A few drops of tarragon is an improvement.

#### 5. White Egg Currie.

Have ready some hard-boiled eggs; shell them and cut them in half. Put them aside. Chop one onion and two cloves of garlic small, and fry in three ounces of butter with twenty-four cloves a pale yellow, then add one dessertspoon of the best currie powder, the milk of a cocoa-nut, and one small tea-cup of rich thick cream. Let it simmer gently for about half an hour. Strain it, and then add salt to taste, a squeeze of lemon, taking great care not to curdle the cream, and lastly, add the eggs. Warm thoroughly through. Serve with a separate dish of rice.

#### 19. Vegetable Stew.

Cut up an onion into rings, chop two beads of garlic, and fry in three ounces of butter with twenty-four cloves; let it get a nice golden colour. Now add sliced potatoes, carrots, turnips, parsnips, and pour over all one pint of water, two tablespoons of mushroom ketchup, salt and Nepaul pepper to taste. Cook till the vegetables are quite tender, and serve.

This is quite as nice as Irish stew with meat in it.

#### 29. Jerusalem Artichokes on Toast.

Peel very carefully and trim nicely; throw them into cold water as you peel them, or they will get discoloured. Boil in salt and water till quite soft; drain; mash them with a fork till quite smooth, with butter, pepper and salt. Put the artichokes thickly on nicely cut pieces of buttered toast, and sprinkle with pepper and salt, and serve. This is simply delicious, though simple.

#### 8. Cocoa-nut Rice.

Boil a quarter pound of small rice in one pint of milk till quite soft. Then add two ounces of butter, sugar to taste, and three ounces of desiccated cocoa-nut. Stir well, and pour into a plain mould that has been rinsed with cold water. Let it get cold. Turn out of the mould into a glass dish, decorate with pretty sweets, such as those sold by Messrs. Clark Nicholls and Coombs, or Mr. E. Roberts of Camberwell.

#### 24. Strawberry Cream Pudding.

Mix some cochineal with ordinary clear plain jelly; line a plain mould with this. Let it set about a quarter of an inch thick, then fill up the mould with the following--half a pound of strawberries passed through a sieve; mix with one cup of good thick cream, sugar to taste, and a little liquid jelly. Mix well together, and pour it in the lined mould. Let it get quite cold and set; dip the mould into hot water for a second; whip the water off, and turn out on a glass dish. Decorate with leaves and flowers of the strawberry.[1]

[1] Raspberries can be done the same way.



## MACARONI RECIPES

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Simple Italian Cookery*, by Antonia Isola

### RIBBON MACARONI

(Pasta fatta in Casa. Fettuccini)

2 1/2 cups of flour

2 eggs

3 tablespoons of cold water

1/2 teaspoon of salt

Put the flour on a bread-board. Make a hole in the middle of it, and break the eggs into it. Add the water and the salt, and mix all together with a fork until the flour is all absorbed and you have a paste which you can roll out. Then take a rolling-pin and roll it out very thin, about the thickness of a ten-cent piece. Leave it spread out like this until it has dried a little. Then double it over a



number of times, always lengthwise, and cut it across in strips about one-half inch wide. Boil two quarts of salted water, and put the ribbons into it, and cook for ten minutes, then drain. Serve with the meat and sauce as in receipt for Macaroni with Meat and Sauce, or with the tomato sauce and cheese only, as desired.

#### TIMBALE OF VERMICELLI WITH TOMATOES ( \_Neapolitan Receipt\_ )

Take ten medium-sized fresh tomatoes and cut them in two crosswise. Put a layer of these into a baking-dish with the liquid side touching the bottom of the dish. Now put another layer with the liquid side up, sprinkle on salt and pepper. Break the raw vermicelli the length of the baking-dish and put a layer of it on top of the tomatoes. Now add another layer of the tomatoes, with the skin side touching the vermicelli, a second layer with the liquid side up, salt and pepper, and another layer of the raw vermicelli, and so on, the top layer being of tomatoes with their liquid side touching the vermicelli. Heat three or four tablespoons of good lard (or butter), and when the lard boils pour it over the tomatoes and vermicelli; then put the dish into the oven and cook until the vermicelli is thoroughly done. After cooling a little while, turn it out into a platter.

#### MACARONI "ALLA SAN GIOVANNELLO"

While three-quarters of a pound of macaroni are boiling in salted water prepare the following: Chop up fine two ounces of ham fat with a little parsley. Peel six medium-sized tomatoes, cut them open, remove the seeds, and any hard or unripe parts, and put them on one side. Take a frying-pan and put into it one scant tablespoon of butter and the chopped ham fat. When the grease is colored put in the sliced tomatoes with salt and pepper. When the tomatoes are cooked and begin to sputter put the macaroni into the pan with them, mix well, add grated Parmesan cheese, and serve.

#### RAVIOLI WITH MEAT

Prepare the paste as in the preceding receipt.

Take whatever meat is desired--chicken, turkey, or veal--this must always be cooked. (Left-over meat may be utilized this way.) Chop the meat very fine, add one tablespoon of grated Parmesan cheese, one egg, a dash of nutmeg, a dash of grated lemon-peel, one tablespoon of butter, cold. Mix these ingredients in a bowl. Take a teaspoon of the mixture and put it into the extended paste, about two inches from the edge. Take another spoonful and put it about two inches away from the

first spoonful. Continue to do this until you have a row of teaspoonfuls across the paste. Then fold over the edge of the paste so as to cover the spoonfuls of mixture, and cut across the paste at the bottom of them. Then cut into squares with the meat in the middle of each square; press down the paste a little at the edges so the meat cannot fall out. Continue to do this until all the meat and the paste are used up.

Put the little squares of paste and meat into the boiling salted water a few at a time, and boil for ten minutes. Serve with tomato sauce, or butter and grated Parmesan cheese.



De Musset

## ALFRED DE MUSSET.

(1810-1857)

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Choix de Poesies*, by Various

Alfred de Musset, né et élevé à Paris, fut parmi les jeunes auteurs qui créèrent le mouvement romantique français; mais trop indépendant pour se rallier à une école quelconque, il se contenta bientôt de suivre son inspiration, sa "Muse." Jeune, beau et assez fortuné, il s'abandonna aux jouissances et aux facilités de la vie qui lui apporta les douloureuses déceptions racontées dans les "Nuits" (Nuit de Mai, Nuit de Décembre, 1835; Nuit d'Août, 1836; Nuit d'Octobre, 1837). A part ses poésies, dont beaucoup, telles que les *\_Stances à la Malibran*, *l'Espoir en Dieu*, *le Saule*, *Souvenir\_*, sont justement célèbres, Musset

écrivit des \_pièces de théâtre\_ en prose et en vers, des \_Contes et Nouvelles\_, et une autobiographie: \_Confession d'un enfant du siècle\_.

LA NUIT DE MAI.

(Fragment).

Lorsque le pélican, lassé d'un long voyage,  
Dans les brouillards du soir retourne à ses roseaux,  
Ses petits affamés courent sur le rivage  
En le voyant au loin s'abattre sur les eaux.  
Déjà, croyant saisir et partager leur proie,  
Ils courent à leur père avec des cris de joie  
En secouant leurs becs sur leurs goîtres hideux.  
Lui, gagnant à pas lents une roche élevée,  
De son aile pendante abritant sa couvée,  
Pêcheur mélancolique, il regarde les cieux.  
Le sang coule à longs flots de sa poitrine ouverte  
En vain il a des mers fouillé la profondeur:  
L'Océan était vide et la plage déserte;  
Pour toute nourriture il apporte son coeur.  
Sombre et silencieux, étendu sur la pierre,  
Partageant à ses fils ses entrailles de père,  
Dans son amour sublime il berce sa douleur.  
Et, regardant couler sa sanglante mamelle,  
Sur son festin de mort il s'affaisse et chancelle,  
Ivre de volupté, de tendresse et d'horreur.  
Mais parfois, au milieu du divin sacrifice,  
Fatigué de mourir dans un trop long supplice,  
Il craint que ses enfants ne le laissent vivant.  
Alors, il se soulève, ouvre son aile au vent,  
Et, se frappant le coeur avec un cri sauvage,  
Il pousse dans la nuit un si funèbre adieu  
Que les oiseaux des mers désertent le rivage,  
Et que le voyageur attardé sur la plage,  
Sentant passer la mort se recommande à Dieu.  
Poète, c'est ainsi que font les grands poètes.  
Ils laissent s'égayer ceux qui vivent un temps;  
Mais les festins humains qu'ils servent à leurs fêtes  
Ressemblent la plupart à ceux des pélicans.  
Quand ils parlent ainsi d'espérances trompées,  
De tristesse et d'oubli, d'amour et de malheur,  
Ce n'est pas un concert à dilater le coeur.  
Leurs déclamations sont comme des épées:  
Elles tracent dans l'air un cercle éblouissant,  
Mais il y pend toujours quelques gouttes de sang.

## LA CHANSON DE FORTUNIO.

Si vous croyez que je vais dire  
Qui j'ose aimer,  
Je ne saurais pour un empire  
Vous la nommer.

Nous allons chanter à la ronde,  
Si vous voulez,  
Que je l'adore et qu'elle est blonde  
Comme les blés.

Je fais ce que sa fantaisie  
Veut m'ordonner,  
Et je puis s'il lui faut ma vie,  
La lui donner.

Du mal qu'une amour ignorée  
Nous fait souffrir,  
J'en porte l'âme déchirée  
Jusqu'à mourir.

Mais j'aime trop pour que je die  
Qui j'ose aimer,  
Et je veux mourir pour ma mie  
Sans la nommer.

## IMPROMPTU.

(En réponse à cette question: Qu'est-ce que la poésie?)

Chasser tout souvenir et fixer la pensée,  
Sur un bel axe d'or la tenir balancée,  
Incertaine, inquiète, immobile pourtant;  
Eterniser peut-être un rêve d'un instant;  
Aimer le vrai, le beau, chercher leur harmonie;  
Ecouter dans son coeur l'écho de son génie;  
Chanter, rire, pleurer, seul, sans but, au hasard;  
D'un sourire, d'un mot, d'un soupir, d'un regard  
Faire un travail exquis, plein de crainte et de charme,  
Faire une perle d'une larme;  
Du poète ici-bas voilà la passion,

Voilà son bien, sa vie et son ambition.



Carducci

## L'ORLANDO FURIOSO

DI

GIOSUÈ CARDUCCI.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *La vita Italiana nel Cinquecento*, by Various

I.

Quando l'Ariosto mise mano all'Orlando? Non si sa preciso, ma su la fine del 1506 la orditura doveva essere molto innanzi. Isabella d'Este marchesana di Mantova, a cui il cardinale Ippolito aveva mandato il poeta per rallegramenti in occasione di un parto, rispondeva il 14 febbraio 1507 al fratello, ringraziando, che l'ambasciatore \_le\_ aveva anche per conto suo addotto gran soddisfazione, avendole con la narrazione dell'opera che compone fatto passare due giorni non solo senza fastidio ma con piacer grandissimo\_. Ludovico s'era messo risolutamente attorno l'opera tosto che credè aver ritrovato presso il cardinale stanza quieta, e provvigione da sopperirgli alle strettezze di famiglia, nelle quali aveva penosamente affaticata la sua gioventù. Nato gli 8 settembre del 1474, egli era allora su la trentina: molto aveva composto di versi in latino, poco e male in italiano, che le sue rime belle sono tutte per l'Alessandro Benucci, scritte cioè nel 1513 e dopo: benchè fin dai primi anni, oltre la prova fanciullesca della \_Tisbe\_, andasse attorno co'l duca Ercole a \_fare\_ cioè a recitare commedie, non ne aveva ancora scritte: ma al poema pensava da un pezzo. Egli era nato e cresciuto in un'aria tutta impregnata dalla rifioritura

classica dei romanzi. La prima edizione del *„Morgante“* in ventitrè canti fu del 1481, la seconda compiuta in ventotto dell'82. La prima edizione dell' *„Orlando innamorato“* in due libri venne del 1486; la seconda, in tre libri, del 95. Nel 95 era anche finito il *„Mambriano“*, e nel 1509 fu stampato con dedicatoria al cardinale Ippolito. Nel 1506, quando l'Ariosto gettava le fondamenta al *„Furioso“*, usciva dalle stampe di Venezia il primo libro della continuazione all' *„Innamorato“* composta dall'Agostini, e il secondo doveva uscire nel 13, tre anni prima che l'Ariosto finisse la sua. Non lasciavano poi tregua alle stampe i poemi minori.

## II.

Quando un'età è ancora poetica, cioè quando la poesia già arte d'individui è per altro in contatto ancora co'l sentimento dell'universale e in scambio di cooperazione con la fantasia e la leggenda popolare, allora la epopea non è nè può esser mai individuale affatto. La materia epica resta in comune per un pezzo fra tutta una razza, ma disposta a prendere nel continuo rimaneggiamento dal genio delle nazioni vario, nelle vicende opposte dei tempi, sotto le forze dei singoli artisti, spiriti, atteggiamenti e forme diverse. Al secolo decimoquinto materia epica erano tuttavia le leggende cavalleresche in specie carolingie nelle quali la immaginazione del popolo e l'arte dei poeti pur rinnovandosi si dilettevano per antico abito, come già, per altro, con meno d'efficacia, la poesia alessandrina rilavorava nelle intelaiature omeriche e su' miti argonautici. La poesia carolingia francese, trasportata in Italia dai trovieri e giullari feudali de' secoli decimosecondo e decimoterzo, ci divenne ben presto popolare, e, quando in Francia l'antica pianta spogliavasi, i nuovi rampolli avevano messo qui foglie e fiori. Il popolo italiano, come aveva tredici e più secoli prima tolto in prestito dalla Grecia non pure il mito iliaco ad innestarci i miti suoi ma l'epos omerico sol di poco e nel men vivo rimaneggiandolo, così allora pigliava dalla Francia la leggenda carolingia, in attenenza anche maggiore con la sua storia recente, con le più fresche idealità, apprestandosi per altro ad animarla e atteggiarla di spiriti e di forme singolarmente nuove. A quelle francesi scaturigini d'epopea si abbeveravano volentieri sì la plebe, sì i grandi e letterati: questi per amore al ristorato nome dell'impero raffigurato in Carlomagno, quella pe'l sentimento religioso che l'accendeva a venerare in Orlando un glorioso martire della fede. E come ispiratrice e arbitra e giudice dell'epopea, quando spontanea e quasi fatale, è la plebe o vero la moltitudine, e come nella plebe prevalgono con l'istinto del soprannaturale e co'l sentimento religioso il culto della forza e l'entusiasmo per il valore, così il carattere epico che signoreggiò tutti gli altri e intorno o sotto al quale si coordinarono gli altri fu Orlando.

La immagine di Ruodlando, prefetto della marca di Britannia ucciso con altri ufficiali del palazzo imperiale in una imboscata di Guasconi tra le gole de' Pirenei l'anno 777, rozzamente scolpita con tradizione e arte monastica su la facciata della cattedrale di Verona, fu da prima venerata come d'un santo dal popolo italiano. Il quale poi, imparando a più genialmente conoscerlo nella marziale ardenza delle canzoni di gesta recitate e cantate su i teatri mobili e in piazza, se ne innamorò, se lo prese, lo fece nascere poveramente in Imola, pargoleggiare eroico mendicante in Sutri, abbattere miracoloso giovinetto un esercito infedele co'l suo re in Aspromonte, lo creò senatore romano, lo vide assistere alla sacra delle vecchie chiese in Firenze, scoprì nell'etrusche rovine di Fiesole l'antro delle fate onde egli uscì tutto incantato, lo ritrovò a Spello gigante e peccatore, ammirò su i campi delle battaglie nazionali i macigni che il paladino aveva lanciati, intitolò dal nome di lui il bel promontorio presso Castellamare e molte torri fin nell'isola di Lampedusa.

La leggenda carolingia s'allargò dunque assai presto in tutta Italia, ma la prima conferma letteraria l'ebbe nelle contrade del settentrione; ella s'acclimò e si svolse in quel movimento che dal secolo decimoterzo al cominciare del decimoquarto, avanti la egemonia toscana, tendeva a costituire nella Lombardia, nella Venezia, nelle regioni circumpadane una lingua e letteratura che dal francese attingeva e derivava assai degli argomenti e non poco di forme e colori alla elocuzione. Le poesie carolingie che corsero i castelli e le piazze dell'alta Italia furono di più maniere. Pe'l contenuto: canzoni di gesta francesi, con alterazioni poche e di sole parole: poemi di argomenti simili a canzoni di gesta, ma discostantisi dalla configurazione epica francese e con introduzione di racconti, favole e personaggi nuovi: poemi la cui contenenza è affatto nuova, o tra le canzoni di gesta fin qui conosciute non se ne trova che ad essi corrispondano. Per la forma: canzoni di gesta in lingua e verseggiatura francese: poemi di lingua e verseggiatura ibrida, nei quali il fondo francese è tutto invaso e guasto da forme del dialetto veneto o meglio di quella lingua letteraria che mal provò d'impiantarsi nel Veneto e nel Lombardo, e il modello della verseggiatura francese è alterato negli accenti, nelle sillabe, nelle rime: cantàri in dialetto veneto con verseggiatura del modello epico francese e serie monoritme.

Della prima famiglia è la *\_Chanson de Roland\_*, che fu anche in Italia il nòcciolo eroico di tutto il ciclo; della seconda sono sei poemi (Beuve d'Hanstone, Berte, Karleto, Berte et Milon, Ogier le Danois, Macaire) di mani diverse, ma raccolti insieme con evidente intenzione ciclica, come quelli che contengono le storie della famiglia carolingia e de' suoi principali eroi. Importantissima la storia degli amori di Berta e Milone e della fanciullezza d'Orlando nato di loro, sì perchè la invenzione non pure non ha riscontro in veruna canzone francese ma è anzi alla leggenda francese del tutto contraria, sì perchè l'azione

è posta in Italia e Orlando fatto italiano, e più ancora perchè negli amori occulti e perseguitati di Milone e di Berta, nelle avventure della fuga e dell'esilio, sin che l'imperatore riconosce nel fanciullo mendicante di Sutri e nella madre nascosta in una grotta il nipote e la sorella, vediamo annunziarsi l'elemento romanzesco che è per essere l'anima della poesia con la quale gli Italiani ricomporranno la materia epica carolingia.

Questi poemi si conservano nella biblioteca marciana di Venezia insieme con altri due, della terza famiglia, ma scritti ancora in francese ibrido, *\_Entrée en Espagne\_* e *\_Prise de Pampelune\_* che vorrebbero più lungo discorso. Autore del primo è un Nicolò, che annunzia, con esempio nuovo nell'epica, la sua persona e la patria, ricordando gloriosamente il mito iliaco tra le leggende carolingie. Son padovano, egli dice, *\_della città che il troiano Antenore fece nella gioiosa marca del Trevigian cortese\_*. Si è messo a *\_trovare\_*, egli afferma, *\_del miglior cristiano che fosse mai cantato da giullare perchè vuole castigare i codardi e vani, far ritornare i villani a cortesia e crescere i rettori di terre in sano consiglio\_*. La sua istoria l'ha composta *\_acciò sia intesa e cantata\_*; e *\_tutto questo vi so dire\_*, aggiunge, *\_perchè io ne sono stato l'autore\_*. Nulla qui dunque manca del poema propriamente letterario, nè l'affermazione della personalità, nè la rivendicazione dell'invenzion propria, nè il fine civile, nè l'intenzione popolare. Aggiungasi che il padovano non condusse su modelli francesi il suo racconto di ben ventimila versi; che ricorre a fonti nuove, certo anche alla sua fantasia, forse a tradizioni indigene; che tratta con abilità molta il dialogo e sfoggia vera eloquenza nei discorsi dei personaggi; che è il primo a narrare e forse a immaginare le avventure di Orlando peregrino per isdegno in Oriente; che è il primo a citare testimone e mallevadore di avventure anche da sè inventate Turpino.

All' *\_Entrata in Ispagna\_* seguita nella materia la *\_Presa di Pamplona\_* anch'essa d'un italiano di Lombardia. Egli non solo fa partecipare alla guerra di Spagna Desiderio re dei Lombardi, in nessuna delle canzoni francesi degnato mai di tanto, ma anche narra come, avendo i Tedeschi dell'esercito di Carlo voluto rubare ai Lombardi il pregio e il premio d'una loro vittoria, questi ne fecero strage; di che adiratosi Carlo riprese e condannò i Lombardi, ma Orlando gli giustificò e difese presso l'imperatore; il quale per ammenda concesse a Desiderio tre privilegi: che quelli di Lombardia fossero sempre e tutti franchi, che tutti senza distinzione di natali potessero divenir cavalieri, che tutti potessero portare la spada a fianco anche in cospetto dei re. La democrazia dei comuni entrò così trionfante nell'epopea feudale. Che se a ciò che già notammo intorno l' *\_Entrata in Ispagna\_* aggiungasi ora come e in questa e nella *\_Presa di Pamplona\_* le favole di più poemi e canzoni sono raggruppate e svolte in un racconto molteplice e continuato a cui è come guida e lume il fatto dell'antagonismo dei prodi e dei traditori, della casa di Chiaramonte e della casa di



Maganza (che era la nota caratteristica e il nesso logico della futura epopea romanzesca italiana), dovremo confessare che di essa epopea l'idea tipica, la forma organica e il procedimento tecnico sono già più che in germe ne' due poemi franco-italiani della Venezia. Anello tra questi e la futura epopea romanzesca in ottava rima furono i cantàri in dialetto veneto e in verseggiatura di modello francese: dei quali ci avanza un Buovo d'Antona in 2525 versi, che deriva dall'omonimo poema della Marciana, ed annunzia il poema toscano su lo stesso argomento. E con essi si chiude il primo periodo della poesia romanzesca italiana, il periodo lombardo-veneto, nel quale Orlando e Oliviero erano recitati su teatri mobili in Milano e i cantastorie delle cose di Francia disturbavano gli anziani di Bologna nel loro palazzo che li bandivano dalla piazza del Comune (1278).

### III.

Di su tali cantàri e di su gli anteriori poemi, dopo che Firenze ebbe ottenuto il primato della lingua e della poesia e l'ottava rima da lirica diventò narrativa, i cantastorie toscani e specialmente fiorentini ripresero la materia epica. La nuova letteratura era riuscita, proprio come Dante voleva, aristocratica (egli diceva \_aulica\_): per una gran parte di popolo la Commedia anche coi commenti rimaneva maestosamente oscura, e il Decameron era troppo artistico: del Canzoniere non è a dire. I dantisti, gli ammiratori del Petrarca e gli amici del Boccaccio disprezzavano coteste storie di paladini udite lombardamente o venezievolmente strillare da rauche voci pei trivii. I Ciompi invece, che bruciavano i palazzi dei cittadini grassi per poi far cavalieri i padroni su le macerie, ammiravano i colpi d'Orlando, forse piangevano su la gran rotta di Roncisvalle, certo applaudivano ferocemente al supplizio di Gano; mentre i mercantucci dagli ozi delle oscure botteghe proseguivano l'ideale delle avventure per le plaghe d'Oriente, gli amori delle fanciulle reali per lo stalliere, e il trionfo e le vendette dello stalliere tornato re. Ma l'abbandono alla plebe di così nobil materia cristiana e cavalleresca dovè dispiacere ai popolani serii, che pur compiacendosi dell'arte nuova erano rimasti fedeli alle tradizioni romane ecclesiastiche del medioevo. In servizio dei quali e per lettura nelle camere e nelle sale, Andrea da Barberino, notaro ed uomo di studi, ricompilò da molti testi molte prose di romanzi, tra le quali più conosciuti e diffusi i \_Reali di Francia\_, e il \_Guerrin Meschino\_: ricompilò con intenzioni critiche il riordinamento cronologico e genealogico, con intendimenti storici e religiosi, con pretensioni di stilista: ricongiunse i Franchi ai Romani, Carlomagno a Costantino, Orlando a Scipione, e al racconto disceso a saltelloni dalla lassa monoritmica francese sostituì la flessuosa dicitura della novella italiana colorata morbidamente qua e là di qualche lume ovidiano. Le compilazioni del Barberino certamente furono lette anche allora, rimasero poi lettura

prediletta al popolo specialmente di campagna, che nei grossi libri in ottave non ci raccapezzava di molto, mentre in quelle prose credeva seriamente leggere la storia della Chiesa e dell'Impero; ma nulla di nuovo e d'importante conferirono al lavoro plebeo toscano su l'epopea carolingia, alle cui prime e caratteristiche produzioni pare che seguissero anzichè precedessero.

Lo spazio a cotesto lavoro, che tanto più crebbe quanto l'uso della letteratura volgare veniva scemando negli alti ordini tutti invasati di greco e latino, può essere posto dal 1350 al 1480. Da prima erano cantàri staccati, poi storie in due o in quattro cantàri, poemi in fine di quaranta o più canti, recitati questi un per giorno o a due sessioni per giorno, con un cenno in fin di ciascuno alla contenenza del seguente. Più famosi e stampati, e ristampati in edizioni di carta straccia fin quasi al nostro secolo, il *\_Buovo d'Antona\_* in ventidue canti, la *\_Spagna\_* in quaranta, la *\_Regina Ancroia\_* in trenta, tutti tre di autori fiorentini, tutti tre del secolo decimoquarto finiente, o al più del decimoquinto cominciante. Nel primo l'argomento è anteriore all'impero di Carlo, e si raccontano le avventure di un lontano avo d'Orlando: il secondo contiene la parte eroica e religiosa della leggenda carolingia, la più gran guerra contro i Saracini e la rotta di Roncisvalle con la morte di Orlando: il terzo i fatti di Rinaldo, che tien fronte a una regina infedele venuta ad assalire il regno di Carlo. In tutti tre il legame ciclico e cercato e proseguito nell'antagonismo tra maganzesi e chiaramontesi. Nel secondo e nel terzo, Orlando, che per isdegno con Carlo va peregrino venturoso per l'Oriente, comincia a divenir romanzesco. Nel *\_Buovo\_* cominciano i segni della mistura comica non senza intenzione satirica nella caricatura di gente di chiesa. L'*\_Ancroia\_* è il tipo già esagerato della donna guerriera. Nella *\_Spagna\_* c'è qualche cosa di più singolare. Carlomagno, che incognito ritornando in Parigi si presenta alla moglie ed è riconosciuto non da lei ma da un cane di lei, assomiglia all'eroe dell'Odissea in modo che non par caso. Tutto ciò in Firenze su la fine del secolo decimoquarto annunzia la fusione degli elementi e degli spiriti che in questa forma dell'epica andrà a compiersi nel decimoquinto e meglio nel decimosesto. Del resto nella *\_Spagna\_* le forme esteriori del genere sono già tutte fissate dalle necessità quotidiane della recitazione: nei principii de' canti le preghiere o invocazioni cristiane che il Pucci imiterà e l'Ariosto cambierà in esordii eleganti: nel fine, le licenze o congedi agli uditori: di più, la interruzione e la ripresa delle diverse fila della favola. L'autore del *\_Buovo\_* comincia ogni canto con ricordare ciò che fu detto o a che fu lasciato il racconto nell'anteriore; come poi fece il Boiardo. Ma il fiorentino chiude una volta il canto avvertendo gli uditori ch'egli ha sete e va a bere, intanto si riposino. L'autore della *\_Spagna\_* su 'l fine del quinto li ammonisce che si ricordino di por mano alla tasca e far dono.

Luigi Pulci, raccogliendo e trasformando spiritosamente la costoro

eredità, chiude il secondo periodo, fiorentino e plebeo, della epopea romanzesca, e introduce al terzo e ultimo, lombardo, nel quale ella diventa classica. Anche nella seconda età dell'arte italiana, dal 1480 in poi, il movimento ricomincia da Firenze intorno la materia popolare e con spiriti popolari. Dopo tanto greco e latino, dopo tanto ricercare le isole fortunate della gloriosa antichità, si sentì il bisogno di ritornare un po' in famiglia, se non altro per assettare a onesta pompa tra le dovizie paterne le ritrovate preziosità degli avi, per lavorare con l'arte nuovamente imparata le materie gregge domestiche. Come Lorenzo de' Medici e Angelo Poliziano avevan preso a rinnovare e rincivilire la ballata, lo strambotto, la lauda, il canto carnescalesco, così il Pulci volse l'orecchio e l'animo alle storie che si cantavano in piazza. Fu l'ultimo dei cantastorie; ma salì le belle scale del palazzo Medici, e lesse, non cantò, alla tavola di Lorenzo e di sua madre Lucrezia, avendo ascoltatori e consiglieri il Poliziano, il Ficini, il Landino, genio o demonio suggeritore quel suo bizzarrissimo ingegno non mai stanco di far capriole e rilevarsi giovenilmente ridendo. Però, con tutto il rispetto ch'egli serba a tutte le monotone forme organiche dell'epica popolare, manca al suo poema la proporzione massimamente tra la prima e la seconda parte; nè ciò fa male, come non stanno male le finestre fuor di squadra nei palazzi di quel tempo. Egli séguita fedele nel grosso della favola i canti dei suoi antecessori, senza darsi briga più volte di pur mutare i versi; e con tutto ciò il Morgante è fra tutti i poemi italiani quello nel quale la individualità del poeta si affaccia più ostinata, più curiosa, più impertinente. Non fece nè potè fare scuola: accennò al periodo classico, mostrando coll'esempio che anche di storie cavalleresche si poteva fare un poema lungo, leggibile ai signori ed ai letterati, e sprigionando tra quella fuga di fantasmi giganteschi e grotteschi un gruppo elettrico di scintille di buon umore.

Passando dai colli toscani alle pianure del Po, dalla piazza della Signoria di Firenze al castello di Niccolò terzo e di Borso, dalla famiglia dei Pisistrati banchieri alla dinastia dei discendenti di Adalberto e Matelda e dei guelfi vincitori di Ezzelino, dalla camera d'un gentiluomo fiorentino scaduto di nome e d'averi alle stanze merlate d'un governatore e ambasciatore ducale, dal Pulci, dico, al Boiardo, l'epopea romanzesca ritrovava il luogo e l'uomo suo. Nella biblioteca del duca Borso c'erano molti romanzi d'avventura del ciclo bretone e della Tavola rotonda. Matteo Maria Boiardo scriveva egloghe latine, aveva tradotto Erodoto ed Apuleio. Intanto l'elemento romanzesco erasi già compenetrato all'epopea carolingia non sì tosto ella fu migrata in Italia; ma nessuno ancora aveva avuto il coraggio di far innamorare Orlando. Anche il Pulci non scherza con l'eroe di Roncisvalle: lo fa combattere e morire con un vero sentimento epico che ricorda la canzone di gesta, lo fa miracoleggiare con una fede infantile e grossa che ricorda la cronaca di Turpino. Ma il Boiardo al ciclo guerriero carolingio che piaceva alla plebe intrecciò il

ciclo galante d'Artù che piaceva alle corti; e nell'opera sua il terribile guercio che tagliava con Durandal i graniti dei Pirenei, lo sposo di Alda, della quale solo il nome occorre due volte nella \_Canzone di Rolando\_, s'innamora d'una principessa della China. Ciò non per tanto, le avventure più strane, le fantasie più bizzarre, le forme più grottesche pigliano nell'opera del Boiardo proporzione e decenza classica. Circe e Medea non erano state fate e maghe? I dragoni non custodivano gli orti delle Esperidi e il vello d'oro? Vulcano fabbricò armi incantate ad Achille e ad Enea, e Achille è il primo degl'invulnerabili. Più, il Boiardo aveva tradotto l'\_Asino d'oro\_, ove la novella sensuale e la divina storia di Psiche s'incontrano fra gl'incanti e le stregonerie più sconce e paurose. Così la nuova forma dell'epopea romanzesca usciva gloriosamente composta dalle mani dello scandinese ammirato lui stesso del suo lavoro.

La calata di Carlo VIII distrasse e ruppe il cerchio degli uditori: la morte ghiacciò la mano del poeta sul principio della terza parte, che gli rimaneva a cantare la disfatta e la morte del re Agramante invasore del regno di Francia, con la fine degli amori di Orlando, di Rinaldo, di Ruggero: morendo, egli lasciava i Saracini vittoriosi intorno Parigi. Per la curiosità volgare potea bastare la continuazione affrettata dell'Agostini. Ma la miglior generazione del miglior tempo del Rinascimento, la generazione a cui il Bembo e il Sannazzaro insegnavano la lingua e la poesia, e dava precetti di cavalleria il Castiglione, di politica il Machiavelli, di filosofia il Pomponazzo, la generazione per cui il Bramante costruiva palazzi che il Primaticcio ornava e Giulio Romano affrescava, la generazione per cui Leonardo e Raffaello dipingevano, Michelangelo scolpiva, il Cellini cesellava, quella generazione voleva qualche cosa di meglio.

Ecco perchè Ludovico Ariosto continuò l'\_Innamorato\_ del Boiardo componendo il \_Furioso\_.

#### IV.

L'Ariosto compose il \_Furioso\_ negli anni che passò al servizio del cardinale Ippolito d'Este, come gentiluomo di fiducia adoperato negli uffici solenni o nei casi ed affari di maggior momento e più rischiosi. Il cardinale credeva, o almeno affermava, avergli dato d'entrata presso a trecento scudi; ma il poeta, interponendo un suo cugino a raggiustare le partite co'l padrone, lagnavasi di non avere più che 150 lire, e queste pagategli a sbalzi ed a sgoccioli. La provvisione ordinaria da una lettera del cardinale (21 gennaio 1511) parrebbe determinata in 240 lire marchesane (1200 fr. circa) su proventi della cancelleria arcivescovile di Milano: c'erano di più i frutti di certi benefizi ecclesiastici che l'Ariosto godè per qualche tempo e avrebbe forse anche potuto accrescere e conservare se avesse portato la chierica: il

pagamento gli era fatto ogni tre mesi, ritenendosi il costo dei panni e vestiarii che venivano, pare, forniti dalla guardaroba del cardinale. Il poeta aveva anche, da due o tre anni all'infuora, anni di guerra, le spese del vivere, nel 1516 vino e frumento per due bocche, paglia e fieno per due cavalli. In tali condizioni di vita fu scritto il *„Furioso“*, che del resto fu tutt'altro che l'unico pensiero e lavoro dell'Ariosto in quei tredici anni. Per feste del cardinale compose nel marzo del 1508 la *„Cassaria“*, nel febbraio dell'anno seguente *„I Suppositi“*, e tradusse e riadattò per le scene qualche commedia di Terenzio.

Veniva intanto la lega di Cambray ad avvolgere gli Estensi nella guerra contro Venezia e nelle furie di Giulio II. Due volte nel 1509 l'Ariosto fu spedito a Roma; la seconda, di dicembre, in gran fretta e fra pericoli grandi, a sollecitare soccorsi contro l'armata che i Veneziani spingevano su per Po. Ebbe notizie in Roma, al 25, della battaglia vinta da Ippolito su l'armata veneta alla Policella tre giorni a dietro, nella quale avean combattuto tre Ariosti; e scriveva subito al cardinale rallegrandosi “di avere istoria da dipingere nel padiglione del mio Ruggero a laude di Vostra Signoria,,,. Su la fine dunque del nove era di certo tutta ordita e già bene avviata la favola del poema, poichè sol nell'ultimo canto figura il padiglione nuziale di Bradamante e Ruggero: non però che il poeta fosse allora, come talun suppose, a scrivere l'ultimo canto: anche nel terzo, quindicesimo e vigesimoquarto è menzione della vittoria di Policella. Nel 1510 il papa, voltatosi coi Veneziani contro i Francesi, bandiva scomunicato e scaduto d'ogni diritto il duca di Ferrara tenutosi fedele alla lega di Francia e intimava al cardinale fratello di ridursi tosto a Roma. Ippolito non la intendeva, e si metteva di mala gamba; e l'Ariosto nel maggio e dal giugno all'agosto fu in Roma a *„placargli la grand'ira di Secondo“*, che una volta in Castel Sant'Angelo minacciò di farlo buttare in fiume se non gli si toglieva davanti. Stretto poi il duca e Ferrara dai Veneziani e dai papali, il poeta partecipò i pericoli della patria. Egli stesso, come ne lo lodò il fratel Gabriele nell'epicedio latino, “tutto armato fu in campo, non per istudio di veder la battaglia e cantar della battaglia gli eventi, ma preparato a morire di onesta morte per la patria e aggiungere onore agli onori del nome suo,,,. Ciò fu sotto i comandi di Enea Pio da Carpi in una seconda battaglia della Policella, che il duca anche vinse su' Veneziani il 24 settembre del dieci, e nella quale è fama che il poeta assalisse e conquistasse egli una nave dei nemici. Subito dopo la battaglia di Ravenna (11 aprile 1512), ove il duca Alfonso fece miracoli con la sua artiglieria distruggendo la fanteria spagnuola senza molti riguardi agli alleati francesi ( — Tirate, tirate, — gridava a' suoi, — son tutti barbari a un modo e nostri nemici — ), egli vide il campo.

Io venni dove le campagne rosse  
Eran del sangue barbaro e latino,

Che fiera stella dianzi a furor mosse;  
E vidi un morto all'altro sì vicino,  
Che, senza premer lor, quasi il terreno  
A molte miglia non dava il cammino.

Ma la vittoria di Ravenna fiaccò e disciolse l'esercito francese; e il duca dovè nel luglio andare a Roma, con salvacondotto, alla sottomissione. Se non che Giulio troppo incalzava con le pretese, e poco cedeva Alfonso; che finalmente, non ostante il salvacondotto, ebbe di catti di scampar dalla \_grand'ira di Secondo\_ tra le armi dei Colonna, che lo tenner celato tre mesi nel loro castello di Marino, onde sotto più travestimenti, di cacciatore, di famiglio, di frate, si salvò per la Toscana a Ferrara nell'ottobre. L'Ariosto accompagnò tra quei pericoli e in quelle fughe e travestimenti il signore; e il primo d'ottobre in riparo a Firenze scriveva a un Gonzaga: "Sono uscito delle latebre e dei lustri delle fiere e passato alle conversazioni degli uomini. Dei nostri pericoli non posso ancora parlare: \_animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit\_. Da parte mia non è quieta ancora la paura, trovandomi ancora in caccia, ormato da levrieri, da' quali Domine ne scampi. Ho passato la notte in una casetta da soccorso, vicino di Firenze, col nobile mascherato, l'orecchio all'erta ed il cuore in soprassalto,,. Nel marzo del 13 con la elezione di Leone X rinacquero o crebbero le speranze di meglio nel duca e più forse in Ludovico, che era stato dei famigliari del cardinal de' Medici, e che subito mandato a Roma per \_faccende ducali\_ vedeva intorno al nuovo papa i suoi vecchi amici, il Divizio, il Sadoletto, il Bembo. Se non che ben presto (7 aprile) scriveva con la sua ironia bonaria a Ferrara: "È vero che ho baciato il piè al papa, e m'ha mostrato di odir volentiera: veduto non credo che m'abbia, chè dopo che è papa non porta più l'occhiale. Offerta alcuna nè da Sua Santità nè da li amici miei divenuti grandi novamente mi è stata fatta: li quali mi pare che tutti imitino il papa in veder poco., Di Bernardo Divizi aggiungeva: "È troppo gran maestro, ed è gran fatica a poterse gli accostare; sì perchè ha sempre intorno un sì grosso cerchio di gente che mal si può penetrare, sì perchè si convien combattere a dieci usci prima che si arrivi dove sia: la qual cosa è a me tanto odiosa, che non so quando lo vedessi: nè anco tento di vederlo, nè lui nè uomo che sia in quel palazzo., E conchiudeva: "Io intendo che a Ferrara si estima che io sia un gran maestro qui: io vi prego che voi li caviate di questo errore., Meglio che la fortuna gli arrise l'amore: di ritorno da Roma in Firenze, per le feste di San Giovanni, s'innamorò fermamente della fiorentina Alessandra Benucci, per la quale scrisse rime bellissime, e la cui leggiadra imagine egli vagheggiava tra le favoleggiate battaglie e dinanzi alle ferite del più gentile de' suoi cavalieri (nel c. XXIV):

Così talora un bel purpureo nastro  
Ho veduto partir tela d'argento  
Da quella bianca man più ch'alabastro

Da cui partire il cor spesso mi sento.

Sul finire del 13 si raccolse in Ferrara, dove il suo cardinale, sperimentato Leone di volontà non migliore che Giulio, s'era ridotto, e dove anche Alessandra venne, vedova com'era d'un Tito Strozzi gentiluomo ferrarese.

Per un anno e mezzo attese a fornire e limare il poema, del quale nel luglio del dodici alle dimande del marchese di Mantova aveva risposto non essere \_limato nè fornito ancora come quello che è grande ed ha bisogno di grande opera\_. Amore la agevolò. Dicono che la Benucci esigesse, per aprire al poeta, compiuto un canto ogni mese. Ai 26 ottobre del quindici l'Ariosto supplicava al doge di Venezia, che, avendo egli “con lunghe vigilie e fatiche, per spasso e ricreazione de' signori e persone di animo gentile e madonne, composta un'opera in la quale si tratta di cose piacevoli e dilettabili d'armi e di amori, e desiderando ponerla in luce per sollazzo e piacere di qualunque vorrà e che si diletterà di leggerla,, volesse il doge dar privilegio nel suo dominio alla stampa che l'autore preparava. Più di un mese innanzi (17 settembre) il Cardinal d'Este aveva scritto al suo cognato marchese di Mantova, come, \_essendo per far stampare un libro di messer Ludovico Ariosto suo servitore ed a questo bisognandogli estrarre da Salò mille risme di carta\_, lo pregava per esenzione del dazio al porgitore della lettera. Il \_Furioso\_ era dunque finito nella seconda metà del quindici che l'Ariosto aveva quarantun anno, età giusta, pensa un francese del giusto mezzo, per l'epica: troppo presto il Tasso, troppo tardi il Milton. E a' 22 aprile del sedici era finito anche di stampare da Giovanni Mazzocchi dal Bondeno in Ferrara.

Nella seconda carta di codesta prima edizione si può leggere una bolla di Leon X del 26 marzo contrassegnata dal Sadoletto, con la quale il pontefice, lodando la singolare e antica osservanza dell'Ariosto a sè e alla sua casa, la egregia dottrina in lui delle lettere e arti buone, l'elegante e chiarissimo ingegno ne' più miti studi e specialmente nella poesia, risolve che tutti questi e meriti e pregi paiono quasi per diritto esigere che il pontefice conceda liberalmente e graziosamente al poeta ogni cosa che possa tornargli in vantaggio, specialmente dimandando egli cose giuste ed oneste; séguita anche lodando i libri dell'\_Orlando Furioso\_ scritti in volgar lingua ed in verso, scherzevolmente (\_ludicro more\_), pur con lungo studio e meditazione e con molte veglie: dopo che viene alle solite comminazioni di multe e pene, compresa la scomunica, a chi riprodurrà o venderà, senza il permesso dell'autore, il \_Furioso\_. Per un poema dove l'apostolo San Giovanni figura per dimostratore di certe cose nel mondo della luna non c'è male da parte di un papa; ma fu la sola larghezza che il patrono di Baraballo facesse al maggior poeta del secolo; se pur larghezza s'ha a dire, dando retta al poeta nella satira quarta:

Di mezza quella bolla anco cortese  
Mi fu, de la quale ora il mio Bibbiena  
Espedito m'ha il resto e le mie spese.

V.

E ora che dire del \_Furioso\_? Anzi tutto, non cose nuove.

Che Angelica e Bradamante non raggiunte mai da' cavalieri i quali si ostinano a seguirle rendano imagine del genio d'Italia; che anche Orlando dia come una somiglianza del popolo italiano inebriato dal filtro del medio evo; che l'Ariosto abbandoni, abbattuto dal trono, alle risate del volgo il vecchio Cesare, il quale aveva di tante illusioni pasciuto lo spirito di Dante, che colpisca l'impero di Carlo V e il regno di Francesco I, rimandando essi oltr'alpe con in dosso a pena gli stracci degli orpelli onde la tradizion cavalleresca aveva ammantato le loro povere persone; sono volate di fantasia storica che nella poetica prosa del Quinet posson piacere, anche perchè movono da un principio di vero; ed è, che il \_Furioso\_ è tutto informato al sentimento e alla vita del tempo in che fu composto. Non so se la fantasia storica del Quinet fosse almen di lontano ispirata da un'idea estetica del Gioberti, il quale, cercando invano con dottrinali preoccupazioni nel \_Furioso\_ una finalità epica, scoprì in vece in quella continuata ironia la satira della cavalleria e del medio evo.

Ma la finalità del poema romanzesco è in sè stesso, è, come scriveva l'Ariosto al doge di Venezia, nel raccontar piacevole a ricreazione delle persone d'animo gentile. L'Ariosto in questi propositi continuava il Boiardo; il quale scherzò anch'egli su gli eroi e su le donne, e mescolò l'umore all'entusiasmo e la novella all'epos, e pure è giustamente annoverato tra i più seri e sentimentali poeti della cavalleria. L'epopea romanzesca, nel lavoro di rifacimento col quale gl'italiani la vennero di continuo trasmutando, non pur non rimase nè potea rimanere in fedel soggezione d'uno spirito tradizionale o quasi originale che la movesse e atteggiasse sempre ad un modo, ma nè fu nè si tenne obbligata mai a riprodurre caratteri stabilmente fermati in un tipo consuetudinario, anzi nello svolgersi a fasi nuove rinnovava tuttavia spiriti e colori secondo gli ambienti diversi. E come gli autori de' poemi franco-italiani e dei cantàri veneti del secolo decimoterzo e decimoquarto avevano con un primo natural processo italianizzati i paladini francesi delle canzoni di gesta, e come i cantastorie di Firenze gli avevano poi ridotti alle proporzioni e alle fattezze intellettuali de' Ciompi; così l'Ariosto vide e ritrasse gli eroi del Boiardo e degli altri suoi prossimi antecessori tra il prisma del molteplice Rinascimento. E male fu scambiato per intenzionale ironia quel fine spirito del tempo nuovo che scherza luminoso e tranquillo fra i pennoni dei paladini e i veli delle dame



del buon tempo antico. E male si giudica prosaicamente ironico e volgarmente scettico quel tempo, nel quale anzi lo spirito italiano (e fu questa la sua gloria e la sua grazia immortale) giunto al sommo dell'ascensione parve abbracciare, se mi si conceda l'immagine, l'antichità e il medio evo, l'occidente e l'oriente, con tale una potente gioia di amore espansivo che anche parve per un momento volerli e poterli in quel suo divino abbracciamento fondere e confondere a sè. La generazione poi della quale era l'Ariosto serbava ancora, malgrado gli Sforza ed i Borgia, qualche sentimento di cavalleria: lo attestano i soldati francesi in quella memorabile liberazione e resistenza di Pisa giuratisi campioni e difensori alle dame, lo attesta la disfida di Barletta e la figura di Baiardo cavalcante severo e gentile tra i lanzichenecchi. La luce del *«Furioso»* spuntò tra la battaglia di Ravenna e la battaglia di Marignano, vinta quella da un giovin capitano che per amore della dama vi combattè con un braccio tutto ignudo, vinta questa da un giovine re che prima di dar dentro volle esser armato cavaliere da Baiardo. Che se la vittoria di Ravenna fu guadagnata dalla fanteria villana di Dumolard e dalla artiglieria sapiente del duca Alfonso (le due arme della rivoluzione e della monarchia moderna), la cavalleria italiana fece nella resistenza dalla parte dei confederati prove gloriose; e Fabrizio Colonna, dopo romanamente respinti dalle mura delle città sette assalti, si precipitò nella battaglia caricando a capo dei suoi cavalieri i cannonieri e i cannoni d'Alfonso e di Francia sin che fu fatto prigioniero in mezzo ai pezzi. E la battaglia di Marignano che durò tre giorni, e nella quale eserciti di tre lingue si mescolarono al lume di luna per iscannarsi, e il re di Francia credendo aver raggiunto un corpo di suoi si trovò in mezzo a ottomila Svizzeri, che per farsi riconoscere gli puntarono (come egli scrisse) seicento picche al naso, «bevve dell'acqua d'un ruscello tutta sanguinosa, mentre un trombetta italiano al suo fianco soffiava tutta notte nel corno, come Orlando a Roncisvalle, contro i corni di Unterwald ed Uri; la battaglia di Marignano non è veramente ariostesca? Tanto poi l'Ariosto fu di per sè lontano dall'intenzione d'una finale ironia contro l'ideale cavalleresco, che a gloria della spada e della lancia fe' maledire a Orlando l'arma da fuoco e l'artiglieria, forza e vanto del suo duca. Ma come si può parlare d'ironia intenzionale dell'Ariosto? dell'Ariosto, che al personaggio di Carlomagno, mortificato dalla familiarità birichina dei piazzaiuoli di Firenze, restituì la maestà d'imperatore e il contegno d'eroe? dell'Ariosto che l'Astolfo fatto buffone dal Boiardo rifece cavaliere d'avventure e miracoli, pronto a tutto affrontare, le porte così dell'inferno come del paradiso, con quella sua seria audacia inglese che lo costituisce degno istromento della provvidenza alla salute d'Orlando? dell'Ariosto che in Orlando il peccato dell'amore, peccato per l'eroe e pe'l cristiano, punisce con la terribil pazzia? E come si può parlare d'ironia continua e finale dinanzi alla terribilità tragica di quella pazzia in quella più che descrizione e narrazione epica, la quale dalla minuta e fedele osservazione dei succedentisi momenti psicologici va

a passo a passo crescendo vorticoso e vertiginoso e finisce in uno scoppio titanico? dinanzi all'eroica grandezza dell'ultimo abbattimento fra i tre re saracini e i tre paladini, e alla mossa, tutta di cuore, del poeta, su'l cadere di Brandimarte,

Padre del ciel dà fra gli eletti tuoi  
Al martir tuo fedele omai ricetta?

La cavalleria feudale era morta da un pezzo, ma l'idealità della cavalleria civile colorava ancora d'un'ultima luce crepuscolare l'Europa trasformantesi nelle monarchie accentratrici e amministrative. Francesco I invecchiava, e diverrà traditore, spergiuro, brutale. Verrà la triste figura di Carlo V. Egli, nella incoronazione, a Bologna, toccava colla spada la testa di chi voleva essere cavaliere dicendogli *«Esto miles»*; e tanti si affollarono chieditori intorno a lui, gridando — *«Sire, sire, ad me, ad me»*, — che egli stanco e sudato e dicendo ai cortigiani — *«No puedo mas»* — inchinò sopra tutti la spada, soggiungendo — *«Estote milites, todos, todos»*; — e così replicando, gli astanti partirono cavalieri tutti e contenti. Allora Teofilo Folengo frate e Pietro Aretino vivente su le tristi lusingherie della rea penna poterono bene con grossolana caricatura fare strazio d'Orlando, di Rinaldo e d'ogni cavalleria. L'Ariosto no: egli era troppo gentiluomo e poeta.

Che l'Ariosto, passando ad altro, attingesse a molte fonti, pigliando, come dicea La Fontaine, il suo bene dove lo trovava, lo disse fin dal tempo del poeta il Pigna, e raccontò com'egli avesse fin tradotto per suo uso romanzi francesi e spagnuoli; lo provarono fin dal cinquecento il Dolce, il Lavezzuola, il Rucellai, mettendo in vista favole, descrizioni, comparazioni ch'egli ebbe derivate da greci, da latini, da italiani. Ultimamente compì le ricerche con un libro, ove nulla, credo, si desidera, Pio Rajna, il critico che più originalmente ha studiato le fonti e i procedimenti della epopea cavalleresca tra noi. Ma dopo tante ricognizioni e rivendicazioni la parte che rimane all'invenzione dell'Ariosto è pur sempre grande, e ciò che egli prese da altre o conservò della leggenda comune od opere d'arte individuali egli lo ha così trasformato sotto il fuoco del suo ingegno e nel crogiuolo dell'arte sua, che a distinguerlo ci vuole il più delle volte un vero lavoro di critica chimica. Questione del resto che importa assai più alla storia della letteratura che a quella dell'arte. Era nell'istituto, per così dire, dell'epopea romanzesca, che ogni nuovo autore prendesse liberamente da' suoi antecessori e vicini tutto che gli giovasse e piacesse; era nel costume del Rinascimento rivestirsi delle spoglie greche e latine. Il Foscolo paragonò benissimo il *«Furioso»* alla chiesa di San Marco, che i Veneziani fabbricarono a colonne di tutti gli ordini, con marmi di tutti i colori, con frammenti dei templi greci e di palazzi bizantini. Gli antiquari fan bene a riconoscere e distinguere il frammento del tale arco romano, i marmi

di quel tempio greco, le colonne della tale altra chiesa bizantina, e anche la rozza pietra d'un torrazzo feudale. Noi chiediamo alla solenne opera dell'architettura: c'è dentro il Dio? Sì? Adoriamolo.

Il dio per noi è l'artista. E artista l'Ariosto è senza paragoni grande. Non quale se lo favoleggia certo volgo di lettori e critici dozzinali, fantasia sbrigliata e smemorata che si prodiga negli episodi sorridendo ella stessa del suo smarrirsi in via dietro le mille sue favole: egli invece ha, come tutti i poeti della famiglia greco-latina, un senso dell'ordine e della proporzione, un senso della finalità artistica, mirabilmente serio e ragionativo. Si propose di continuare l' *Innamorato* del Boiardo, "per non introdurre, osservava benissimo il Pigna, nuovi nomi di persone e nuovi cominciamenti di materie nell'orecchie degli italiani, essendo che i soggetti del conte erano già nella loro mente impressi ed instabiliti in tal guisa, che egli, non continovandogli ma diversa istoria cominciando, cosa poco dilettevole composto avrebbe,": intitolò da Orlando il poema, perchè Orlando era l'eroe più popolarmente conosciuto ed accetto della gesta carolingia; la guerra poi tra cristiani e infedeli, oltre che l'aveva ereditata dal Boiardo, era d'obbligo, come quella che forniva, per così dire, il centro d'unità e lo spazio e il termine idealmente storico a ogni epopea romanzesca. Ma la parte di continuatore abbandonò egli subito e uscì francamente dalla serie o dalla classe de' suoi predecessori avendo in prima luce i caratteri già secondari di Ruggero e di Bradamante e facendo del loro matrimonio il soggetto principale del poema, soggetto che ha in sè il concetto politico, la illustrazione della casa d'Este, come l'Eneide ebbe l'apoteosi della casa Giulia. Così l'Ariosto, lungi dagli intendimenti e dagli spiriti o democratici o feudali de' suoi predecessori, rientra e rimane tutto nel tempo suo, nel primo ventennio del secolo decimosesto, quando, non rialzatosi ancora con Carlo V l'impero nella nuova forma e forza di gran potenza militare straniera a soggettare l'Italia, era possibile, era opportuno, era utile sollevare e glorificare una antica dinastia italiana contro le insidie e le minacce della mostruosa signoria papale che al fine ingoiò Ferrara. E rientra nel tempo suo anche come artista. Egli è un classico, ma classico composito del Rinascimento; e il *Furioso* è, ben disse il Voltaire, l'Iliade e l'Odissea insieme, il poema politico e religioso, l'epopea eroica, con Carlo-Magno ed Orlando, il poema privato e familiare, il romanzo moderno, con Ruggero e Bradamante. Favola generale o meglio fondamento del complesso poema è la guerra fra tutta la cristianità e tutto l'islam: centro Parigi, con i due re, i due eserciti l'uno a fronte dell'altro, dai quali e ai quali vengono, vanno, ritornano, intrecciandosi nelle direzioni di tutti i venti le donne, i cavalieri, l'armi, gli amori. Sommo tra i cavalieri Orlando pe'l cui amore e per la pazzia la catastrofe rimane sospesa come per l'ira d'Achille la presa di Troia: principalissimi tra i personaggi Ruggero e Bradamante, di nazione e fede diversi, nella disgiunzione de' cui amori si ricongiunge il vario movimento de' due campi, nella

congiunzione la favola si chiude. Orlando rinsavito trasporta la guerra cristiana in Africa espugnando Biserta capitale del nemico di Carlo, e la finisce col gran duello nell'isola di Lampedusa. Ruggero, nello stesso giorno delle nozze con Bradamante, uccide l'ultimo e più terribil nemico avanzato al nome cristiano, Rodomonte. Così la cristianità è non pur salva ma sicura, e la famiglia d'Este ha principio.

## VI.

L'Ariosto, per attendere con più riposato animo agli studi, fatta nel 1527 divisione dai fratelli, che egli aveva allevati e messi in istato, si tirò su una casetta in contrada Mirasole, e vi condusse attorno un orto o giardino, la cui costruzione e coltivazione e la revisione del poema gli furono ultime occupazioni della vita. “Nelle cose dei giardini — scrive suo figlio Virginio — teneva il modo medesimo che nel far de' versi; perchè mai non lasciava cosa alcuna che piantasse più di tre mesi in un loco, e, se piantava anime di persiche o semente di alcuna sorte, andava tante volte a vedere se germogliavano, che finalmente rompeva il germoglio. E perchè aveva poca cognizione d'erbe, il più delle volte presumea che qualunque erba che nascesse vicina alla cosa seminata da esso fosse quella; la custodiva con diligenza grande fin tanto che la cosa fosse ridotta a' termini che non accascava averne dubbio. Io mi ricordo, ch'avendo seminato de' capperi ogni giorno andava a vederli, e stava con una allegrezza grande di così bella nascita; finalmente trovò ch'erano sambuchi, e che de' capperi non n'eran nati alcuni., Quanto alla casa: “perchè — séguita Virginio — male corrispondevan le cose fatte all'animo suo, solea dolersi spesso che non gli fosse così facile il mutar le fabbriche come li suoi versi, e agli uomini che gli dicevano che si maravigliavano ch'esso non facesse una bella casa essendo persona che così ben dipingeva i palazzi, rispondeva, che faceva quelli belli senza denari., Della correzione dei versi: “avvedutosi — riferisce il Pigna — che alle volte il cercar troppo di cambiare ogni minima cosa più tosto di danno gli era che di giovamento, usò di dire che de' versi quello avveniva che degli alberi: per ciò che una pianta che piantata da sè vaga risurga, se vi s'aggiunge la mano del coltivatore che alquanto la rimondi, più felicemente ancora può crescere; ma se, dopo troppo vi sta attorno, ella perde la sua natia vaghezza. Parimente una stanza che quasi ne sia dalla mente in un subito uscita e che sia bella, se quel poco di rozzo vi si lieva che vi si scorge essere avvenuto nel primo parto, potrà agevolmente parer migliore; ma, se pur tuttavia il poeta vuole affinarla, rimarrane senza quella prima beltà che portò seco nel nascere.,

Certo che un sommo buon gusto guidò l'Ariosto alla perfezione nel correggere, che non avvenne al Tasso. Ma anch'egli, come il Tasso,

sarebbesi abbandonato a troppi critici e consiglieri, se fosse vero che avesse dato a esaminare ed emendare il poema al Bembo, al Molza, al Navagero, al Sadoletto, a Marc'Antognio Magno e a non so quanti altri; se fosse vero, ciò che racconta il Giraldis, che, aumentatolo, due anni innanzi di darlo alla stampa, lo ponesse nella sala della sua casa, lasciandolo in balia del giudizio di ciascuno. Benissimo pensava il La Bruyère, non essere opera per quanto perfetta che non s'andasse dissolvendo per la critica, se l'autore consentisse a tutti i censori che volessero tolto via il luogo che a loro piaccia meno. Ma l'Ariosto pare a me chiedesse e accettasse consigli ed emendamenti soltanto su l'elocuzione, nè c'è prova che ad altri per ciò si rivolgesse che al Bembo; al quale a' 23 febbraio del 1531 scriveva: "Io son per finir di rivedere il mio Furioso; poi verrò a Padova per conferire con V. S. e imparare da Lei quello che per me non sono atto a conoscere.,, E a Padova fu di fatto nell'ottobre, ma v'andò dai bagni d'Abano con la febbre e vi restò pochi giorni pure ammalato, per poi seguitare il duca a Venezia. Con la terzana a dosso e in pochi giorni le conferenze non poterono essere sì lunghe che l'Ariosto imparasse dal Bembo a correggere un poema di quarantasei canti. Ci sarebbero anche stati, secondo la tradizione, correttori più umili: un monaco Severo camaldolese di Volterra o di Firenzuola; un Annibale Bichi, uomo d'armi da Siena, che scrisse certe stanze e una lettera all'Aretino; l'Alessandra Benucci di Firenze. Che il frate volterrano e il soldato senese potessero suggerire o migliorare al poeta qualche frase o qualche forma, non si vuol negare; ma che potessero insegnargli e correggergli tutta la lingua con la quale è scritto il Furioso par difficile. Che l'amore su la fiorentina bocca dell'Alessandra potesse dirozzare certe grossolanità del ferrarese, amerei crederlo; ma l'Alessandra nelle lettere che di lei ci rimangono lombardeggia ella a tutto spiano. E pure è fama che l'Ariosto negli ultimi anni fosse venuto a tali scrupoli di fiorentinismo da dar dei punti al Manzoni; non voleva, per esempio, scrivere palazzo, perchè i Fiorentini allora dicevano palagio. Tutto si accomoderebbe se fosse vero ciò che asseriva il Salviati, facendosi della toscanità di messer Ludovico arma e scudo contro il Tasso, cioè che egli dimorò in Firenze, per imparare i vocaboli e le proprietà del linguaggio, parecchi anni. Ma l'Ariosto fu, è vero, in Firenze, ben sei volte, ma sempre o di passaggio o per breve soggiorno: al più si può concedere al Fornari che un qualche anno (forse il 1520) ei ci restasse per ispazio di sei mesi in casa d'un Vespucci parente dell'Alessandra. Ma sei mesi sono eglino sufficienti a tesoreggiare tanta ricchezza di gentil parlare quanta è nei quarantasei canti? E pure il Foscolo notava giustamente: "Se si confrontino le due edizioni (del 16 e del 32), e il confronto sarebbe lezione a' giovani poeti utilissima, apparirà incomprendibile come uno scrittore che incominciò dal peccare sì grossamente contro le regole del buon gusto e della dizione poetica potesse in séguito espungere tali colpe e mettere in loro luogo così gran numero di trascendenti bellezze.,, In somma, se fosse poi vero che all'Ariosto anche di proprietà e d'eleganza fosse

trovatore e affinare l'ingegno aiutato da una facoltà di percezione prontissima e squisitissima?

VII.

Parve singolare al Gibbon che de' cinque maggiori poeti epici venuti nello spazio di quasi tremila anni sul teatro del mondo due sieno reclamati a sì breve intervallo da sì piccol territorio quale il ducato di Ferrara. Ma lasciando da una parte Omero e dall'altra Virgilio e Milton, i quali solo l'antica poetica poteva ammettere nella stessa famiglia con l'Ariosto, e aggiungendo il Boiardo che nel genere romanzesco è de' poeti maggiori, pare anzi naturalissimo, chi ricordi e accetti le cose in principio discorse su lo svolgimento dell'epopea romanzesca, che Ferrara producesse nello spazio di un secolo i tre maggiori poemi cavallereschi a distanza quasi precisa d'un cinquant'anni fra loro, cominciando il movimento coll' *Innamorato* nel 1486, toccando la perfezione col *Furioso* nel 1532, determinando la reazione con la *Gerusalemme* nel 1581. Contro altre osservazioni e meraviglie che nell'aer crasso della bassura ferrarese potesse accendersi quel gran sole della fantasia ariostesca, io volli diffondermi a raccogliere i particolari delle condizioni economiche e delle difficoltà politiche, delle incertezze e inquietezze quasi continue tra le quali fu concepito e composto il *Furioso*, io volli distendermi a raccontare le strettezze, le taccagnerie, le ingratitudini e iniquità delle quali l'Ariosto fu tribolato tutta quasi la vita; perchè, raffrontate tali condizioni alle condizioni di pace, di agiatezza, di pompa, tra le quali scrissero Virgilio ed il Goethe, raffrontata alla villa di Posilipo e al casino di Weimar la casa paterna dell'Ariosto onde la veduta del piano è scarsa e sconsolata e la casetta di Mirasole ove la vita è imprigionata fra pochi metri di orti e di mura, e ripensando quanto spirital mondo fosse intuito e creato, quanta e quale serenità di poesia si spandesse da tali confini, l'uomo si rialzi e si ralleghi e conforti, che in fine in fine l'ingegno umano trovi tutto in sè stesso. Nell'animo di Ludovico Ariosto non tramontava mai il sole interno più veramente che non tramontasse su i regni di Carlo quinto il sole della natura.

Più degna di esser notata mi pare la somiglianza delle circostanze, di preparazione, d'ispirazione, di svolgimento e di effetti, che è tra il lavoro letterario dell'Ariosto e quello, da una parte, di Dante, dall'altra di Alessandro Manzoni. Nati e cresciuti tutti tre nei principii d'un movimento e d'un mutamento politico e letterario che determinò le più differenti e in diverso aspetto più importanti età della vita italiana, tutti tre, modificate essenzialmente ma non spogliate al tutto le idee e le affezioni della gioventù, accompagnarono il mutamento e il movimento, fin che, non dico lo fermarono, ma lo illustrarono al punto più alto dell'ascensione con

un'opera che, raccogliendo tutte le idealità del loro passato ed agendo con grande efficacia su gli spiriti le opinioni e le concezioni estetiche del presente, eccitò pure una reazione. Dante, cresciuto nel primo scadimento del papato e dell'impero, del medio evo in somma, e quando il reggimento delle città italiane passava nelle forme o del comune o della signoria dalle oligarchie gentilizie all'autorità democratica, mutatosi da guelfo a ghibellino e da dicitor d'amore a neoclassico, scrisse, dopo la rivoluzione di Giano della Bella che gli tolse la nobiltà, dopo il colpo di stato del Valois che gli tolse la patria, la *Commedia*, opera guelfa insieme e ghibellina, scolastica e popolare sì nel concepimento sì nell'esecuzione; e pur raggiungendo gli albori dell'età nuova chiuse il medio evo, levandone alle maggiori altezze l'idealità e universalità artistica: alle quali seguirono per reazione l'opera individuale del Petrarca e l'opera realistica del Boccaccio. Nato e cresciuto quando l'umanesimo finiva d'abbattere i resti di quelle comunità d'arte e pensiero indigene e plebee che s'erano mantenute nell'intermezzo tra il medio evo e la riforma, quando le signorie nazionali erano per disparire attratte nella violenza dell'impero risorto come monarchia conquistatrice, l'Ariosto, da poeta latino trasmutatosi a poeta di romanzi, dopo la invasione francese, durante la guerra della lega santa contro Venezia e del papa contro il suo duca, scrisse, e dopo la caduta della repubblica di Firenze compì, il suo poema, chiudendo i periodi della poesia romanzesca, l'ideale delle plebi, dei signori e dei capitani di ventura de' secoli decimoquarto e decimoquinto; il poema che canta le glorie d'una dinastia contro l'impero e la chiesa; il poema che trasforma con un lavoro perfettamente classico la materia medioevale e rende finalmente italiana la lingua toscana; il poema che, pure operando con grandissima efficacia su'l movimento letterario non pure italiano ma europeo, provoca sì negli spiriti sì nelle forme la reazione cristiana aristotelica individuale del Tasso. Nato il Manzoni tra i fulgori ed i fulmini della rivoluzione francese, crescendo quando il filosofismo dell'Enciclopedia della Costituente della Convenzione impersonatosi nel Bonaparte provocava la reazione tra medioevale e liberale dell'Europa, quando la invasione francese con le forme di repubblica o di regno conturbando e sommovendo la vecchia società italiana cagionava un risveglio quasi nazionale degli spiriti guelfi e ghibellini, egli, di giacobino e classico, tramutatosi in cattolico e romantico, chiudeva quel periodo di sconvolgimento e di turbazione con un libro di raccoglimento individuale, di realismo ideale, in cui il soggettivismo autoritario giacobino persistendo riforma a immagine sua le idee cattoliche e le teorie romantiche; un libro, che pure efficacemente operando su l'educazione estetica provocò una reazione subitanea sì nei pensieri e sentimenti sì nelle forme. A compiere i paralleli, anche gli anni della pubblicazione delle tre opere si corrispondono. La *Commedia*, pensata e lavorata per tutti i primi anni del secolo decimoquarto fu finita nel 1321: fu finito nel 1516, corretto nel 21, riformato nel 32 il *Furioso*: i *Promessi Sposi* finiti nel 1826

furono corretti nel 40.

E qui basta. Le generazioni e l'ordine sociale fiorenti e dominanti in Italia in questo scorcio di secolo hanno il diritto e anche il dovere di riconoscere nel Manzoni il loro più affine rappresentante artistico. Ma, se alcun voglia comparare o anteporre l'efficacia e l'importanza storica dell'opera in prosa di lui alla poesia di Dante e dell'Ariosto, quegli obbedirà a una preoccupazione del presente che si può bene intendere ma non può esser levata alle regioni della storia, quegli sottometterà il vero obiettivo alle sue parziali impressioni estetiche, quegli correrà pericolo di scambiare una riforma di sentimento e stile in Italia per una rivoluzione della letteratura europea. Lasciamo di Dante. Ma dirimpetto alla esuberanza di vita e alla calda rappresentazione di tutto il sentimento, di tutta un'epoca che tutta l'Europa ammirò nel *„Furioso“*, la novella provinciale del Manzoni è domesticamente e democraticamente modesta. Che se lo spirito giacobino d'accordo questa volta con l'umiltà cristiana parvero audacia rivoluzionaria persuadendo al Manzoni di scegliere a eroi due contadini brianzoli, gli vietarono però di fare poema; e al meraviglioso inventore e analizzatore prosastico venne a mancare un addentellato nella tradizione non pur nazionale ma europea, la quale si perpetua in un retaggio di grandi leggende e di grandi fatti di razza e di nazione congiunti ai grandi problemi psicologici che si rinnovano nei secoli. I poemi del secolo decimonono sono il *„Faust“* e il *„Prometeo liberato“*. Il problema psicologico dei *„Promessi Sposi“* fu un fenomeno passeggero in alcune anime di sola una generazione, e la preoccupazione di cotesto breve momento, la restaurazione romantica del cattolicesimo, forse che rattrista, se non raffredda, lo spirito artistico del vero e nobile volume. Il quale forse per ciò non s'ebbe fuori d'Italia, in Europa, che un successo inferiore al valor suo reale, inferiore di molto alla fortuna di altri romanzi francesi e inglesi che gl'Italiani reputano di gran lunga inferiori al romanzo lombardo. Il *„Furioso“*, oltre le versioni e le edizioni moltissime in Francia, in Spagna, in Germania, in Inghilterra, in Olanda fin dal secolo in cui fu composto, ispirò a tempi diversi quattro dei più varii e favoriti ingegni della letteratura europea, lo Spencer nella *„Regina delle fate“* al secolo decimosesto, il Byron nel *„Don Giovanni“* al nostro, e al settecento i due tra loro più simpatici ingegni delle due più avverse nazioni, il Voltaire nella *„Pulcella“*, il Wieland nell'*„Oberon“*. Il *„Furioso“* dunque tiene un luogo ben alto nella letteratura europea.

VIII.

Opera così varia e superba d'uomo così semplice e buono!

“Mai non si satisfaceva de' versi suoi — lasciò nei ricordi Virginio suo figlio — e li mutava e rimutava; e per questo non si teneva in



mente niun suo verso. Ma di cosa che perdesse niuna gli dolse mai tanto, come di un epigramma che fece per una colonna di marmo la quale si ruppe nel portarla a Ferrara.,, A questo punto la memoria di Virginio è interrotta. Finirò io. Erano due colonne che dovevano sorreggere una statua equestre di Ercole I: nel trasporto rotta e caduta in Po l'una per cui l'Ariosto scrisse l'epigramma, l'altra fu lasciata e giacque inutile ove ora è in Ferrara la piazza ariostea, per molti anni, fino al 1659, che la drizzarono e vi posero su la statua di Alessandro settimo papa. Nel 1796 i repubblicani della Cispadana atterrarono dalla colonna il pontefice, e vi piantarono, presente il generale Napoleone Bonaparte, una statua della Libertà in gesso. Nel 1799 gli Austriaci calarono giù la libertà di gesso, e per conto loro non inalzarono nulla. Ma nel 1810 gli antichi repubblicani della Cispadana elevarono sopra la colonna la statua di Napoleone imperatore, che, fondator di repubbliche, aveva già assistito alla elevazione della libertà di gesso: anch'egli vi durò ben poco, fu abbassato nel 1814. Dal 1833 in poi su quella colonna che l'Ariosto vide portata a Ferrara per sorreggere la statua del duca sotto il quale egli nacque, e che invece sopportò un papa, una repubblica, un imperatore; dal 1833 su quella colonna sta la imagine di Ludovico Ariosto scolpita da Francesco Vidoni. Non è una bella statua. Ma nè papi nè imperatori nè la libertà medesima cacceran te di lassù o poeta divino, che scrivesti l'\_Orlando\_ e tanto ti dolevi d'aver perduto un epigramma latino, e tanto ti consolavi del crescere dei sambuchi credendo fossero capperi.



## THE AFRICAN LION. (*Felis leo*)

By Dane Coolidge.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Birds and Nature*, Vol. 10 No. 3 [October 1901], by Various

The African Lion, familiar to the general public as the sulky tenant of a barred cage, ranges with freer strides throughout the length and breadth of Africa, and even extends through Persia into the northwestern part of India. Fossil remains show that at one time *Felis leo* inhabited the southern part of Europe as well, but the king of beasts was evidently considered good sport by primitive man, and he became extinct in Europe except where, in the Roman amphitheatres, and in many a meaner cage since, he has roared for the edification of the populace.

The literature of all nations is full of allusions to the Lion; to his bravery, his grandeur and his strength. The old Assyrian kings carved pictures of themselves in bas relief hurling javelins into crouching Lions, and many a sportsman is to-day beating the thorn-thickets and trailing over the sandy plains of Africa with the same unreasoning enthusiasm, yet hoping, perhaps, in a vague way to hand down his name along with the Assyrian kings by writing a book. It is the Lion's misfortune as well as his glory that he is king of beasts.

The Lion differs from the other Felidæ in the great strength and massive proportions of his head and shoulders, and more especially in the arrangement and growth of the hair on the body. Where, in other cats, the hair lies flat and close along the skin, the Lion is so clothed only on his yellowish-brown body. The hair of the top of the head and of the neck to the shoulders stands erect or bristles forward, forming the beautiful and characteristic mane of the adult male and suggesting in a way not otherwise possible the massive strength of the great paws, one blow from which will fell an ox or crush the skull of a man without an effort. In most Lions the mane is of a darker color than the remainder of the body, being often almost black. The elbows, tip of tail and the under parts of the body are also clothed with this long, bristly hair, but it is found only on males above three years of age. The females have smaller heads and shoulders and are of a uniform color.

In many minor ways the Lion is specially adapted for his predatory life. Every tooth in his head is sharp pointed or sharp edged. The great canine teeth are set far apart in his square jaws and locked together like a vice. The molars are transformed from grinders into incisors, yet are so strong that they will crack heavy bones. The papillæ on the tongue are so developed that they resemble long, horny spines curved backwards, giving the tongue the appearance of a coarse rasp. With this rough tongue the Lion can lick the meat from bones as easily as a house cat eats butter, and should a friendly Lion lick his keeper's hand the flesh would be torn and the blood flow. The claws are very large and sharp, and are so nicely sheathed in the soft cushions of his feet that the Lion neither blunts nor wears them down. Yet when he strikes with tense paws every claw is like a hook and a dagger to tear and cut.

In seeking his prey the Lion lies in wait by springs and water holes and leaps upon his victims from the ambush of some bush or rock as yellow as his own tawny hide; or, failing in this, he sneaks up the wind and through the thickets and reeds of a watercourse or swamp and quickly leaps upon a surprised antelope or zebra or savage buffalo, crushing it to the ground by his great weight, while he strikes and tears it with paws and teeth. In cultivated districts the Lion prowls about the fields and villages, seizing cattle and sheep, and often, when he is old and lazy, rushes into some camp or hut at night and carries off a man. In many parts of Africa the natives build great corrals of thorns about

their camps to keep the Lions away, and should one be heard in the night they light fires and wave torches until the dawn.

Under ordinary circumstances the Lion attends to his own hunting, and when seen in the daytime retreats to some denser cover where he will not be disturbed. This is often cited as an evidence of cowardice, but is such a common characteristic of big game and of animals, and even men of undoubted courage, that it should not be held against him. There is no animal in the world which can consistently hunt for trouble and survive, and so long as the Lion can keep his stomach filled and his sleep undisturbed he is probably content to waive the title of king of beasts.

Lion hunting has been held a royal sport in all times, with the result that the Lion has been exterminated in many parts of its natural habitat and forced back into the wilder parts of desert and plain. Unlike the tiger, the Lion is rarely found in forests, and is unable to climb trees. He is ordinarily stalked in the daytime, when, with stomach full, he sleeps among rocks and bushes, or shot from stands as he approaches some water hole or carcass by night. The literature of African exploration and travel abounds with accounts of Lions killed by men and men killed by Lions. In these days of zinc balls and repeating rifles it is generally the Lion that is killed. To the thorough-paced English sportsman like Sir Samuel Baker or Gordon Cumming the Lion hunt is recreation merely, and with their ten-bore rifles and British phlegm they are in no more danger than if they were chasing foxes through the dales of England.

The family life of the Lion is very interesting and human. So far as is known, a single male and female remain together year after year, irrespective of the pairing season, the Lion feeding and caring for his Lioness and cubs and educating the young in the duties of life. For two or three years the cubs follow their parents, so that Lions are often found in small troops. Cases have been reported where they have joined for a preconcerted hunt, and the Lioness often goes up the wind to startle game and drive it towards her ambushed mate, following after for a share of the prey. Hon. W. H. Drummond, in "The Large Game and Natural History of South and Southeast Africa," gives the following account of the feast after the victim had been slain: "The Lion had by this time quite killed the beautiful animal, but instead of proceeding to eat it, he got up and roared vigorously until there was an answer, and in a few minutes a Lioness, accompanied by four whelps, came trotting up from the same direction as the zebra, which no doubt she had been to drive towards her husband. They formed a fine picture as they all stood round the carcass, the whelps tearing it and biting it, but unable to get through the tough skin. Then the Lion lay down, and the Lioness, driving her offspring before her, did the same, four or five yards off, upon which he got up and, commencing to eat, had soon finished a hind leg, retiring a few yards on one side as soon as he had done so. The Lioness

came up next and tore the carcass to shreds, bolting huge mouthfuls, but not objecting to the whelps eating as much as they could find. There was a good deal of snarling and quarreling among these young Lions, and occasionally a standup fight for a minute, but their mother did not take any notice of them except to give them a smart blow with her paw if they got in her way. There was now little left of the zebra but a few bones, and the whole Lion family walked quietly away, the Lioness leading, and the Lion often turning his head to see that they were not followed, bringing up the rear."



Weigall

## CLEOPATRA AND CÆSAR IN THE BESIEGED PALACE AT ALEXANDRIA

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Life and Times of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt*, by Arthur E.P. Brome Weigall

There can be little doubt that Cæsar's all-night interview with Cleopatra put an entirely new complexion upon his conception of the situation. Until the Queen's dramatic entry into the Palace, his main object in remaining for a short time at Alexandria, after he had been shown the severed head of the murdered Pompey, had been to assert his authority in that city of unrivalled commercial opulence, and at the same time to make full use of a favourable opportunity to rest his weary mind and body in the luxury of its royal residence and the perfection of its sun-bathed summer days, while Rome should be

quieted down and made ready for his coming. But now a new factor had introduced itself. He had found that the Queen of this desirable and important country was a young woman after his own heart: a dare-devil girl, whose manners and beauty had fired his imagination, and whose apparent admiration for him had set him thinking of the uses to which he might put the devotion he confidently expected to arouse. She seems to have laid her case before him with frankness and sincerity. She had shown him how her brother had driven her from the throne, in direct opposition to the will of her father, who had so earnestly desired the two of them to reign jointly and in harmony. And while she had talked to him through the long hours of the night he had found himself most willingly carried away by the desire to obtain her love, both for the pleasure which it might be expected to afford him and for the political advantage which would accrue from such an intercourse. Here was a simple means of bringing Egypt under his control--Egypt which was the granary of the world, the most important commercial market of the Mediterranean, the most powerful factor in eastern politics, and the gateway of the unconquered kingdoms of the Orient. He had made himself lord of the West; Greece and Asia Minor were, since the late war, at his feet; and now Alexandria, so long the support of Pompey's faction, should come to him with the devotion of its Queen. I do not hold with those who suppose him to have been led like a lamb to the slaughter by the wiles of Cleopatra, and to have succumbed to her charms in the manner of one whose passions have confused his brain, causing him to forget all things save only his desire. In consideration of the fact that the young Queen was at that time, so far as we know, a woman of blameless character, and that he, on the contrary, was a man of the very worst possible reputation in regard to the opposite sex, it seems, to say the least, unfair that the burden of the blame for the subsequent events should have been assigned for all these centuries to Cleopatra.

Before the end of that eventful night Cæsar seems to have determined to excite the passionate love of that wild and irresponsible girl, whose personality and political importance made a doubly powerful appeal to him; and ere the light of dawn had entered the room his decision to restore her to the throne, and to place her brother in the far background, had been irrevocably made. As the sun rose he sent for King Ptolemy, who, on entering Cæsar's presence, must have been dismayed to be confronted with his sister whom he had driven into exile and against whom he had so recently been fighting at Pelusium. It would appear that Cæsar treated him with sternness, asking him how he had dared to go against the wishes of his father, who had entrusted their fulfilment to the Roman people, and demanding that he should at once make his peace with Cleopatra. At this the young man lost his temper, and, rushing from the room, cried out to his friends and attendants who were waiting outside that he had been betrayed and that his cause was lost. Snatching the royal diadem from his head in his boyish rage and

chagrin, he dashed it upon the ground, and, no doubt, burst into tears. Thereupon an uproar arose, and the numerous Alexandrians who still remained within the Roman lines at once gathering round their King, nearly succeeded in communicating their excitement to the royal troops in the city, and arousing them to a concerted attack upon the Palace by land and sea. Cæsar, however, hurried out and addressed the crowd, promising to arrange matters to their satisfaction; and thereupon he called a meeting at which Ptolemy and Cleopatra were both induced to attend, and he read out to them their father's will wherein it was emphatically stated that they were to reign together. He reiterated his right, as representative of the Roman people, to adjust the dispute; and at last he appears to have effected a reconciliation between the brother and sister. The unfortunate Ptolemy must have realised that from that moment his ambitions and hopes were become dust and ashes, for he would now always remain under the scrutiny of his elder sister; and the liberty of action for which he and his ministers had plotted and schemed was for ever gone. According to Dion Cassius, he could already see plainly that there was an understanding between Cæsar and his sister; and Cleopatra's manner doubtless betrayed to him her elation. She must have been intensely excited. A few hours previously she had been an exile, creeping back to her own city in imminent danger of her life; now, not only was she Queen of Egypt once more, but she had won the esteem and, so it seemed, the heart also of the Autocrat of the world, whose word was absolute law to the nations. One may almost picture her making faces at her brother as they sat opposite one another in Cæsar's improvised court of justice, and the unhappy boy's distress must have been acute.

Cæsar's dominant idea now was to control the politics of Egypt by means of a skilled play upon the heart of Cleopatra. He did not much care what happened to King Ptolemy or to his minister Potheinos, for they had forfeited their right to consideration by their attempt to set aside the wishes of Auletes, and by their disgusting behaviour to Pompey, who, though Cæsar's enemy, had yet been his mighty fellow-countryman; but it was his wish as soon as possible to placate the mob, and to endear the people of Alexandria to him, so that in three or four weeks' time he might leave the country in undisturbed quiet. Now the control of Cyprus was one of the most fervent aspirations of the city, and it seems to have occurred to Cæsar that the presentation of the island to their royal house would be keenly appreciated by them, and would go a long way to appease their hostile excitement. When the Romans annexed Cyprus in B.C. 58, the Alexandrians had risen in revolt against Auletes largely because he had made no attempt to claim the country for himself. It had been more or less continuously an appendage of the Egyptian crown, and its possession was still the people's dearest wish. Now, therefore, according to Dion, Cæsar made a present of the island to Egypt in the names of the two younger members of the royal house, Prince Ptolemy and Princess

Arsinoe; and though we have no records definitely to show that they ever assumed control of their new possession, or that it ceased, at any rate for a year or two, to be regarded as a part of the Roman province of Cilicia, it is certain that a few years later, in B.C. 42, it had become an Egyptian dominion and was administered by a viceroy of that country.[28]

Having thus relieved the situation, Cæsar turned his attention to other matters. While Auletes was in Rome, in B.C. 59, he had incurred enormous debts in his efforts to buy the support of the Roman Senate in re-establishing himself upon the Ptolemaic throne, and in this fact Cæsar now saw a means both of showing his benevolence towards the Egyptians, and of making them pay for the upkeep of his small fleet and army at Alexandria. His claim on behalf of the creditors of Auletes he fixed at the very moderate sum of ten million denarii (£400,000), although it must have been realised by all that the original debts amounted to a much higher figure than this. At the same time he made no attempt to demand a war contribution from the Egyptians, although their original advocacy of the cause of Pompey would have justified him in doing so.[29] In this manner, and by the gift of Cyprus, he made a bid for the goodwill of the Alexandrians; but, unfortunately, his efforts in this direction were entirely frustrated by the intrigues of Potheinos. There probably need not have been any difficulty in the raising of £400,000; but Potheinos chose to order the King's golden dishes and the rich vessels in the temples to be melted down and converted into money. He furnished the King's own table with wooden or earthenware plates and bowls, and caused the fact to be made known to the townspeople, in order that they should be shown the straits to which Cæsar's cupidity had reduced them. Meanwhile, he supplied the Roman soldiers with a very poor quality of corn, and told them, in reply to their complaints, that they ought to be grateful that they received any at all, since they had no right to it. Nor did he hesitate to tell Cæsar that he ought not to waste his time in Alexandria, or concern himself with the insignificant affairs of Egypt, when urgent business should be calling him back to Rome. His manner towards the Dictator was consistently rude and hostile, and there seems little doubt that he was plotting against him and was keeping in touch with Achillas.

Hostilities of a more or less sporadic nature soon broke out, and it was not long before Cæsar made his first hit at the enemy. Hearing that they were attempting to man their imprisoned ships, which lay still in the western portion of the Great Harbour, and knowing that he was not strong enough either to hold or to utilise more than a few of them, he sent out a little force which succeeded in setting fire to, and destroying, the whole fleet, consisting of the fifty men-o'-war which, during the late hostilities, had been lent to Pompey, twenty-two guardships, and thirty-eight other craft, thus leaving in

their possession only those vessels which lay in the Harbour of the Happy Return, beyond the Heptastadium. In this conflagration some of the buildings on the quay near the harbour appear to have been burnt, and it would seem that some portion of the famous Alexandrian library was destroyed; but the silence of contemporary writers upon this literary catastrophe indicates that the loss was not great, and, to my mind, puts out of account the statement of later authors that the burning of the entire library occurred on that occasion. Cæsar's next move was to seize the Pharos Lighthouse and the eastern end of the island upon which it was built, thus securing the entrance to the Great Harbour, and making the passage of his ships to the open sea a manœuvre which could be employed at any moment. At the same time he threw up the strongest fortifications at all the vulnerable points in his land defences, and thereby rendered himself absolutely secure from direct assault.

He was not much troubled by the situation. It is said that he was obliged more than once to keep awake all night in order to protect himself against assassination; but such a contingency did not interfere to any great extent with his enjoyments of the life in the Alexandrian Palace. From early youth he must have been accustomed to the thought of the assassin's knife. His many love-affairs had made imminent each day the possibility of sudden death, and his political and administrative career also laid him open at all times to a murderous attack. The jealousy of the husbands whose wives he had stolen, the vengeance of the survivors of the massacres instigated by him, the resentment of the politicians whose ambitions he had thwarted, and the hatred of innumerable persons whom, in one way or another, he had offended, placed his life in continuous jeopardy. The machinations of Potheinos, therefore, left him undismayed, and he was able to prosecute what was, in plain language, the seduction of the Queen of Egypt with an undistracted mind.

Cleopatra appears to have been as strongly attracted to Cæsar as he was to her; and although at the outset each realised the advantage of winning the other's heart, and regulated their actions accordingly, there seems little doubt that, after a day or two of close companionship, a romantic attachment of a very genuine nature had been formed between them. In the case of Cleopatra, no doubt, her love held all the sweetness of the first serious affair of her life, and on the part of Cæsar there is apparent the passionate delight of a man past his prime in the vivacity and charm of a beautiful young girl. Though elderly, Cæsar was what a romanticist would call an ideal lover. His keen, handsome face, his athletic and graceful figure, the fascination of his manners, and the wonder of the deeds which he had performed, might be calculated to win the heart of any woman; and to Cleopatra he must have made a special appeal by reason of his reputation for bravery and reliability on all occasions, and his present display of



\_sang-froid\_ and light-heartedness.

Cæsar was, at this time, in holiday mood, and the life he led at the Palace was of the gayest description. He had cast from him the cares of state with an ease which came of frequent practice in the art of throwing off responsibilities; and when about October 25th he received news from Rome that he had been made Dictator for the whole of the coming year, 47, he was able to feel that there was no cause for anxiety. While the unfortunate young Ptolemy sulked in the background, Cæsar and Cleopatra openly sought one another's company and made merry together, it would seem, for a large part of every day. With such a man as Cæsar, the result of this intimacy was inevitable; nor was it to be expected that the happy-go-lucky and impetuous girl of but twenty years of age would act with much caution or propriety under the peculiar and exciting circumstances. It is possible that she had already gone through the form of marriage with her co-regnant brother, as was the custom of the Egyptian Court; but it is highly unlikely that this was anything more than the emptiest formality, and there is no reason to doubt that in actual fact she was, when she met Cæsar, still unwedded. The child which in due course she presented to the Dictator was her first-born; but had there been a previous marriage of more than a formal nature, it is at least probable, in view of her subsequent productivity, that she would already have been in enjoyment of the privileges of motherhood.

The gaiety of the life in the besieged Palace, and the progress of the romance which was there being enacted, were rudely disturbed by two consecutive events which led at once to the outbreak of really serious hostilities. The little Princess Arsinoe, who, like all the women of this family, must have been endowed with great spirit and pluck, suddenly made her escape from the Roman lines, accompanied by her \_nutritius\_ Ganymedes,[30] and joined the Egyptian forces under Achillas. The plot, organised no doubt by Ganymedes, had for its object the raising of the Princess to the throne, while Cleopatra and her two brothers were imprisoned in the Lochias, and no sooner had they reached the Egyptian headquarters than they began freely to bribe all officers and officials of importance in order to accomplish their purpose. Achillas, however, who had his own game to play, thought it wiser to remain loyal to his sovereign, and to attempt to rescue him from Cæsar's clutches. It was not long before a quarrel arose between Ganymedes and Achillas, which ended in the prompt assassination of the latter, whose functions were at once assumed by his murderer, the war being thereupon prosecuted with renewed vigour. Previous to the death of Achillas, Potheinos had been in secret communication with him, apparently in regard to the possibility of murdering Cæsar and effecting the escape of King Ptolemy and himself from the Palace ere Arsinoe and Ganymedes obtained control of affairs. Information of the plot was given to Cæsar by his barber, "a busy, listening fellow, whose

excessive timidity made him inquisitive into everything”;<sup>[31]</sup> and, at a feast held to celebrate the reconciliation between Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Potheinos was arrested and immediately beheaded, a death which the poet Lucan considers to have been very much too good for him, since it was that by which he had caused the great Pompey to die. So far as one can now tell, Cæsar was entirely justified in putting this wretched eunuch out of the way of further worldly mischief. He belonged to that class of court functionary which is met with throughout the history of the Orient, and which invariably calls forth the denunciation of the more moral West; but it is to be remembered in his favour that, so far as we know, he schemed as eagerly for the fortunes of his young sovereign Ptolemy as he did for his own advancement, and his treacherous manœuvres were directed against the menacing intrusion of a power which was relentlessly crushing the life out of the royal houses of the accessible world. His crime against fallen Pompey was no more dastardly than were many other of the recorded acts of the Court he served; and the fact that he, like his two fellow-conspirators, Achilles and Theodotos, paid in blood and tears for the riches of the moment, goes far to exonerate him, at this remote date, from further execration.

The first act of the war which caused Cæsar any misgivings was the pollution of his water supply by the enemy, and the consequent nervousness of his men. The Royal Area obtained its drinking water through subterranean channels communicating with the lake at the back of the city; and no sooner had Cæsar realised that these channels might be tampered with than he attempted to cut his way southwards, probably along the broad street<sup>[32]</sup> which led to the Gate of the Sun and to the Lake Harbour. Here, however, he met with a stubborn resistance, and the loss of life might have been very great had he persisted in his endeavour. Fortunately, however, the sinking of trial shafts within the besieged territory led to the discovery of an abundance of good water, the existence of which had not been suspected; and thus he was saved from the ignominy of being ousted from the city which he had entered in such solemn pomp, and of being forced to retire across the Mediterranean, his self-imposed task left uncompleted, and his ambitions for the future of Cleopatra unfulfilled.

Not long after this the welcome news was brought to him that the Thirty-seventh Legion had crossed from Asia Minor with food supplies, arms, and siege-instruments, and was anchored off the Egyptian coast, being for the moment unable to reach him owing to contrary winds. Cæsar at once sailed out to meet them, with his entire fleet, the ships being manned only by their Rhodian crews, all the troops having been left to hold the land defences. Effecting a junction with these reinforcements, he returned to the harbour, easily defeated the Egyptian vessels which had collected to the north of the Island of Pharos, and sailed triumphantly back to his moorings below the Palace.

So confident now was he in his strength that he next sailed round the island, and attacked the Egyptian fleet in its own harbour beyond the Heptastadium, inflicting heavy losses upon them. He then landed on the western end of Pharos, which was still held by the enemy, carried the forts by storm, and effected a junction with his own men who were stationed around the lighthouse at the eastern end. His plan was to advance across the Heptastadium, and thus, by holding both the island and the mole, to obtain possession of the western Harbour of the Happy Return and ultimately to strike a wedge into the city upon that side. But here he suffered a dangerous reverse. While he was leading in person the attack upon the south or city end of the Heptastadium, and his men were crowding on to it from the island and from the vessels in the Great Harbour, the Egyptians made a spirited attack upon its northern end, thus hemming the Romans in upon the narrow causeway, to the consternation of those who watched the battle from the Lochias Promontory. Fortunately vessels were at hand to take off the survivors of this sanguinary engagement, as the enemy drove them back from either end of the causeway; and presently they had all scrambled aboard and were rowing at full speed across the Great Harbour. Such numbers, however, jumped on to the deck of the vessel into which Cæsar had entered that it capsized, and we are then presented with the dramatic picture of the ruler of the world swimming for his life through the quiet waters of the harbour, holding aloft in one hand a bundle of important papers which he happened to be carrying at the moment of the catastrophe, dragging his scarlet military cloak along by his teeth, and at the same time constantly ducking his rather bald head under the water to avoid the missiles which were hurled at him by the victorious Egyptians, who must have been capering about upon the recaptured mole, all talking and shouting at once. He was, however, soon picked up by one of his ships; and thus he returned to the Palace, very cold and dripping wet, and having in the end lost the cloak which was the cherished mark of his rank. Four hundred legionaries and a number of seamen perished in this engagement, most of them being drowned; and now, perhaps for the first time, it began to appear to Cæsar that the warfare which he was waging was not the amusing game he had thought it. For at least four months he had entertained himself in the Palace, spending his days in pottering around his perfectly secure defences and his nights in enjoying the company of Cleopatra. Up till now he must have been in constant receipt of news from Rome, where his affairs were being managed by Antony, his boisterous but fairly reliable lieutenant, and it is evident that nothing had occurred there to necessitate his return. Far from being hemmed in within the Palace and obliged to fight for his life, as is generally supposed to have been the case, it seems to me that his position at all times was as open as it was secure. He could have travelled across the Mediterranean at any moment; and, had he thought it desirable, he could have sailed over to Italy for a few weeks and returned to Alexandria without any great risk. His

fleet had shown itself quite capable of defending him from danger upon the high seas, as, for example, when he had sailed out to meet the Thirty-seventh Legion;<sup>[33]</sup> and, as on that occasion, his troops could have been left in security in their fortified position. Supplies from Syria were plentiful, and the Rhodian sailors, after escorting him as far as Cyprus, could have returned to their duties at Alexandria in order to ensure the safe and continuous arrival of these stores and provisions.

It is thus very apparent that he had no wish to abandon the enjoyments of his winter in the Egyptian capital, where he had become thoroughly absorbed both in the little Queen of that country and in the problems which were represented to him by her. He was an elderly man, and the weight of his years caused him to feel a temporary distaste for the restless anxieties which awaited him in Rome. His ambitions in the Occident had been attained; and now, finding himself engaged in what, I would suggest, was an easily managed and not at all dangerous war, he was determined to carry the struggle through to its inevitable end, and to find in this quite interesting and occasionally exciting task an excuse for remaining by the side of the woman who, for the time being, absorbed the attention of his wayward affections. Already he was beginning to realise that the subjection of Egypt to his will was a matter of very great political importance, as will be explained hereafter; and he felt the keenest objection to abandoning the Queen to her own devices, both on this account and by reason of the hold which she had obtained upon his heart. In after years he did not look back upon the fighting with an interest sufficient to induce him to record its history, as he had done that of other campaigns, but he caused an official account to be written by one of his comrades; and this author has been at pains to show that the struggle was severe in character. Such an interpretation of the war, however, though now unanimously accepted, is to be received with caution, and need not be taken more seriously than the statement that, in the first instance, Cæsar's prolonged stay at Alexandria was due to the Etesian winds which made it difficult for his ships to leave the harbour. These annual winds from the north might have delayed his return for a week or two; but it is obvious that he had no desire to set sail; and the author of *De Bello Alexandrino* was doubtless permitted to cover Cæsar's apparent negligence of important Roman affairs by thus attributing his lengthy absence to the strength of the enemy and to the inclemency of the Fates.

Now, however, after the ignominious defeat upon the Heptastadium, Cæsar appears to have become fully determined to punish the Alexandrians and to prosecute the campaign with more energy. He seems soon to have received news that a large army was marching across the desert from Syria to his relief, under the joint leadership of Mithridates of Pergamum, a natural son of Mithridates the Great, the Jewish Antipater, father of Herod, and Iamblichus, son of Sampsiceramus, a famous Arab

chieftain from Hemesa. With the advent of these forces he knew that he would be able to crush all resistance and to impose his will upon Egypt; and he now, therefore, took a step which clearly shows his determination to handle affairs with sternness and ruthlessness, in such a manner that Cleopatra should speedily become sole ruler of the country, and thus should be in a position to lay all the might of her kingdom in his hands.

The Princess Arsinoe had failed to make herself Queen of Egypt in spite of the efforts of Ganymedes, and the royal army was still endeavouring to rescue King Ptolemy and to fight under his banner. Cæsar, therefore, determined to hand the young man over to them, knowing, as the historian of the war admits, that there was little probability of such an action leading to a cessation of hostilities. His avowed object in taking this step was to give Ptolemy the opportunity of arranging terms of peace for him; but he did not hesitate to record officially his opinion that, in the event of a continuation of the war, it would be far more honourable for him to be fighting against a king than against "a crowd of sweepings of the earth and renegades." The truth of the matter, however, seems to me to be that Cæsar wished to rid himself of the boy, who stood in the way of the accomplishment of his schemes in regard to the sole sovereignty of Cleopatra; and by handing him over to the enemy at the moment when the news of the arrival of the army from Syria made the Egyptian downfall absolutely certain, he insured the young man's inevitable death or degradation. The miserable Ptolemy must have realised this, for when Cæsar instructed him to go over to his friends beyond the Roman lines, he burst into tears and begged to be allowed to remain in the Palace. He knew quite well that the Egyptians had not a chance of victory--that when once he had taken up his residence with his own people their conqueror would treat him as an enemy and punish him accordingly. Cæsar, however, on his part, was aware that if in the hour of Roman victory Ptolemy was still under his protection, it would be difficult not to carry out the terms of the will of Auletes by making him joint-sovereign with Cleopatra. The King's tears and paradoxical protestations of devotion were therefore ignored; and forthwith he was pushed out of the Palace into the welcoming arms of the Alexandrians, the younger brother, whom Cæsar had designed for the safely distant throne of Cyprus, being left in the custody of the Romans alone with Cleopatra.

The relieving army from Syria soon arrived at the eastern frontier of Egypt, and, taking Pelusium by storm, gave battle to the King's forces not far from the Canopic mouth of the Nile. The Egyptians were easily defeated, and the invaders marched along the eastern edge of the Delta towards Memphis (near the modern Cairo), just below which they crossed the Nile to the western bank. The young Ptolemy thereupon, expecting no mercy at Cæsar's hands, put himself boldly at the head of such troops as could be spared from the siege of the Palace at Alexandria,

and marched across the Delta to measure swords with Mithridates and his allies. No sooner was he gone from the city than Cæsar, leaving a small garrison in the Palace, sailed out of the harbour with as many men as he could crowd into the ships at his disposal, and moved off eastwards as though making for Canopus or Pelusium. Under cover of darkness, however, he turned in the opposite direction, and before dawn disembarked upon the deserted shore some miles to the west of Alexandria. He thus out-manœuvred the Egyptian fleet with ease, and, incidentally, demonstrated that he had been throughout the siege perfectly free to come and go across the water as he chose. Marching along the western border of the desert, as his friends had marched along the eastern, he effected a junction with them at the apex of the Delta, not far north of Memphis, and immediately turned to attack the approaching Egyptian army. Ptolemy, on learning of their advance, fortified himself in a strong position at the foot of a \_tell\_, or mound, the Nile being upon one flank, a marsh upon the other, and a canal in front of him; but the allies, after a two-days' battle, turned the position and gained a complete victory. The turning movement had been entrusted to a certain Carfulenus, who afterwards fell at Mutina fighting against Antony, and this officer managed to penetrate into the Egyptian camp. At his approach Ptolemy appears to have jumped into one of the boats which lay moored upon the Nile; but the weight of the numbers of fugitives who followed his example sank the vessel, and the young king was never seen alive again. It is said that his dead body was recognised afterwards by the golden corselet which he wore, and which, no doubt, had caused by its weight his rapid death. His tragic end, at the age of fifteen, relieved Cæsar of the embarrassing necessity either of pardoning him and making him joint-sovereign with Cleopatra, according to the terms of his father's will, or of carrying him captive to Rome and putting him to death in the customary manner at the close of his triumph. The boy had foreseen the fate which would be chosen for him, when he had begged with tears to be allowed to remain in the Palace; and his sudden submersion in the muddy waters of the Nile must have terminated a life which of late had been intolerably overshadowed by the knowledge that his existence was an obstacle to Cæsar's relentless ambitions, and by the horror of the certainty of speedy death.

On March 27th, B.C. 47,[34] Cæsar, who had ridden on with his cavalry, entered Alexandria in triumph, its gates being now thrown open to him. The inhabitants dressed themselves in mourning garments, sending deputations to him to beg for his mercy and forgiveness, and bringing out to him the statues of their gods as a token of their entire submission. Princess Arsinoe and Ganymedes were handed over to him as prisoners: and in pomp he rode through the city to the Palace, where as a conquering hero and saviour he was received into the arms of Cleopatra.

# NOGI

By Harriet Monroe

From: Project Gutenberg's *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, Volume I*, by Various

Great soldier of the fighting clan,  
Across Port Arthur's frowning face of stone  
You drew the battle sword of old Japan,  
And struck the White Tsar from his Asian throne.

Once more the samurai sword  
Struck to the carved hilt in your loyal hand,  
That not alone your heaven-descended lord  
Should meanly wander in the spirit land.

Your own proud way, O eastern star,  
Grandly at last you followed. Out it leads  
To that high heaven where all the heroes are,  
Lovers of death for causes and for creeds.



## SELECTED BIOGRAPHIES

Edith Wharton (/ˈiːdiθ ˈwɔːrtən/; born Edith Newbold Jones; January 24, 1862 – August 11, 1937) was an American novelist, short story writer, and designer. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_Wharton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Wharton)

Arthur Edward Pearse Brome Weigall (1880 – 3 January 1934) was an English Egyptologist, stage designer, journalist and author whose works span the whole range from histories of Ancient Egypt through historical biographies, guide-books, popular novels, screenplays and lyrics. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur\\_Weigall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Weigall)

Antonia Isola (born May 16, 1876 in New York), is the pseudonym of Mabel Earl McGinnis. She wrote *Simple Italian Cookery*, published by Harper & Brothers, February 1912.

René Boylesve (14 April 1867 in La Haye-Descartes – 14 January 1926 in Paris), born René Marie Auguste Tardiveau, was a French writer and a literary critic.

Jean-Henri Casimir Fabre (22 December 1823 – 11 October 1915) was a French naturalist, entomologist, and author known for the lively style of his popular books on the lives of insects.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Henri\\_Fabre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Henri_Fabre)

Giosuè Alessandro Giuseppe Carducci (Italian: [dʒozu'ɛ kkar'duttʃi]; 27 July 1835 – 16 February 1907) was an Italian poet and teacher. He was very influential<sup>[1]</sup> and was regarded as the official national poet of modern Italy.<sup>[2]</sup> In 1906 he became the first Italian to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giosu%C3%A8\\_Carducci](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giosu%C3%A8_Carducci)

Albert Mockel (27 December 1866 – 30 January 1945) was a Belgian Symbolist poet. Born in Ougrée, he was the editor of *La Wallonie*, an influential journal of Belgian Symbolism.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert\\_Mockel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Mockel)

Zoltán Ambrus (22 February 1861 in Debrecen – 28 February 1932 in Budapest) was a Hungarian writer and translator. In 1900, he became editor of *Új Magyar Szemle*, and wrote some pieces for *Nyugat*, as well as serving as director of the National Theater (between 1917 and 1922). He wrote about the urban setting of Hungary in his work. His novel *Midás király* (1906) is a key psychological work. He translated a substantial amount of French literature including Flaubert, Cherbuliez, Maupassant, Anatole France, and Balzac.  
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Khalil Gibran (/dʒɪˈbrɑːn/;<sup>[1]</sup> sometimes spelled Kahlil;<sup>[a]</sup> full Arabic name Gibran Khalil Gibran (Arabic: جبران خليل جبران / ALA-LC: Jubrān Khalīl Jubrān or Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān) (January 6, 1883 – April 10, 1931) was a Lebanese American writer, poet and visual artist.

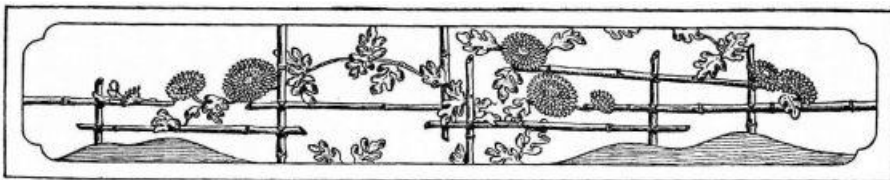
Emmet Lewis Beach, Jr 18 Jun 1892 - 3 Sep 1947 (aged 55) Saginaw, Michigan.  
Years in Harvard College: 1911-13. Degrees: A.B. 1913; A.M. 19U. Occupation: Playwright.

Margery Reed, the accomplished daughter of Verner and Mary Reed, was “one whose life was always youth.” While she spoke German, French and Italian fluently, Margery had a love affair with the English language and wrote poetry, prose and powerful short stories filled with imagery and poetic phrasing.  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2333264.Margery\\_Verner\\_Reed](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2333264.Margery_Verner_Reed)

Josephine Preston Peabody (May 30, 1874 – December 4, 1922) was an American poet and dramatist. From 1901 to 1903 she was instructor in English at Wellesley. The Stratford-on-Avon prize went to her in 1909 for her drama *The Piper*, which was produced in England in 1910; and in America at the New Theatre, New York City, in 1911. She met Khalil Gibran in 1898 when he was fifteen in Boston via Fred Holland Day, the American photographer and co-founder of the publishing house Copeland-Day. They exchanged a number of letters that are published in the book *Gibran and World*.  
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Alfred Louis Charles de Musset-Pathay (French: [al.fʁɛd də my.sɛ]; 11 December 1810 – 2 May 1857) was a French dramatist, poet, and novelist. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred\\_de\\_Musset](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_de_Musset)





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